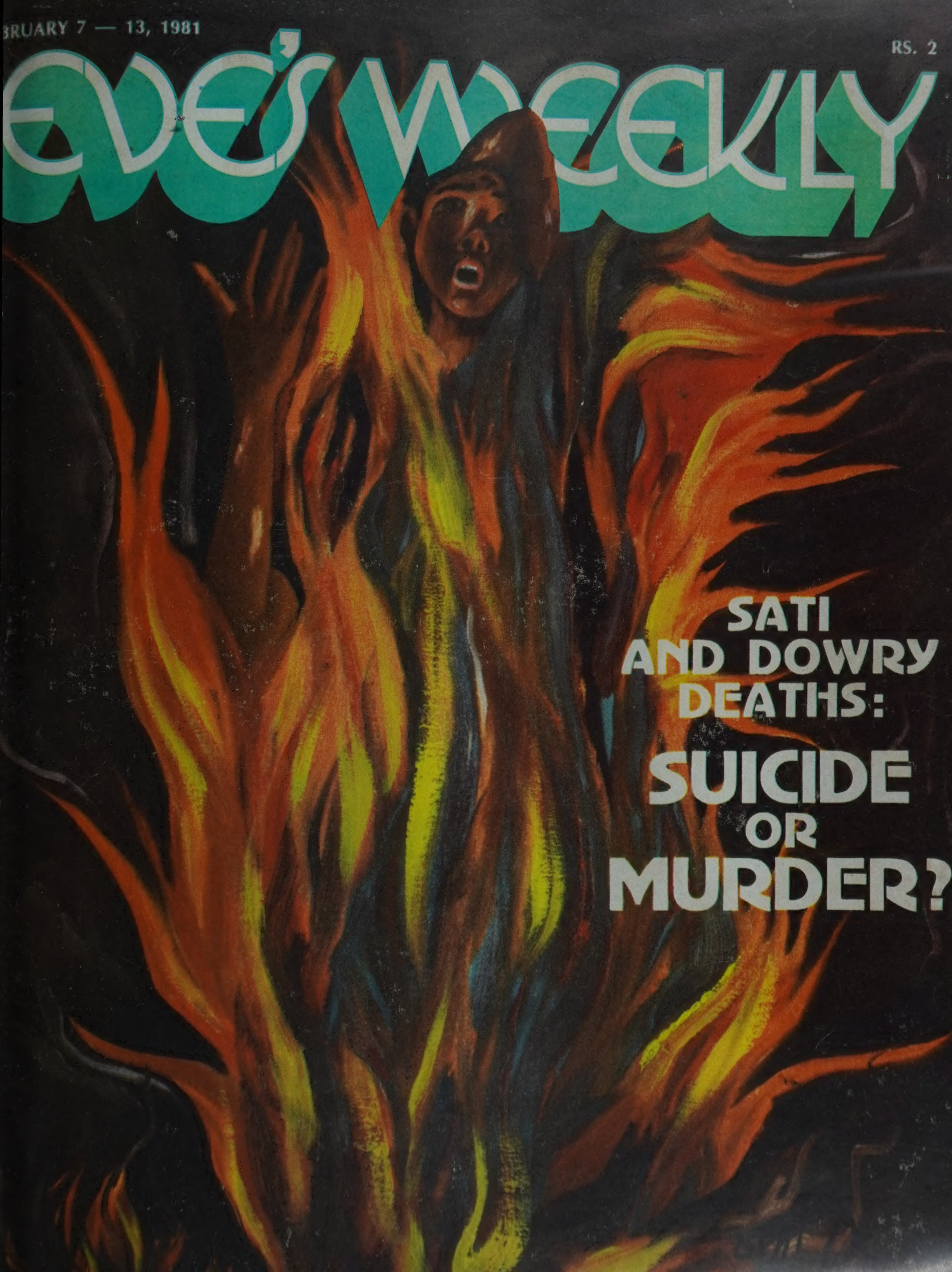
BRUARY 7 — 13, 1981

RS. 2

EVE'S WEEKLY



SATI AND DOWRY DEATHS: SUICIDE OR MURDER?

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FEB. 7 — FEB. 13, 1981

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DRIVEN TO DEATH

12 A committee that went into the reasons for the alarming number of suicides in Gujarat made certain recommendations. But there is a need to study the subject further.

SATI: A DISTURBING REVIVAL

17 Hundreds of misguided women, dressed up as brides, gathered in Delhi to commemorate the self-immolation of Rani Sati, a virgin widow.

A LIVING MEMORIAL

45 Mrinalini Sarabhai dances in memory of the countless young women sacrificed at the altar of dowry.

FOSTERING COMMUNAL HARMONY

39 Napoleon once remarked, "Give me good mothers and I will give you a good nation." This is specially true of India, where women can prevent communal riots.

ALSO

A botanical paradise — **page 15.** A suicide a day — **page 16.** The desperate ones — **page 19.** A rural touch — **page 23.** The egoists — **page 24.** Young viewpoint— **page 29.** The mystery at Gul Mohar — **page 32.** The law on dowry — **page 41.** Why film stars can't marry — **page 43.** Eve today : Shanno Khurana — **page 46.** Is Sati voluntary? **page 48.** Passing through — **page 51.**

REGULAR FEATURES

Your Page/**7**, Readers' Voice/**9**, People Known & Unknown/**21**, Comics & Jokes/**27**, Fashion/**30**, Beauty/**33**, Hiya Honey/**55**, People & Events/**56**, Horoscope/**58**.

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WHAT PRICE GOLD?

1st PRIZE

It was shocking to read about the gruesome murder of Shantadevi Narayanan in a first class ladies' compartment of a Bombay train. What has happened to her can also happen to others. From time immemorial, gold has been the lure for a majority of crimes. Women, especially in India, seem to be crazy about gold. Our social customs, too, encourage this. For instance, a 'mangalsutra' and four gold bangles are a 'must' for the bride. I have noticed women from Kerala wearing at least a dozen gold bangles and these women mostly travel in second class compartments of local trains. Such display of gold is dangerous. There was a recent incident where a dacoit chopped off the hand of a woman along with a handful of gold bangles. His fellow passengers in the bus noticed the blood oozing from the dacoit's bag and so his crime came to light. There were also other instances where even ears have been chopped off for the earrings. Women in the North now exercise great care not to display their ornaments: and with the lower middle-class, gold is no more in style. Women prefer imitation jewellery. Yes it is time women took precautions to protect themselves from criminals. After all, who can replace lost life?

DR. SHOBANA MATHUR, Hyderabad

Nothing can be more important than life itself, and we have often, in these columns, ridiculed this penchant for gold and warned women to be careful. It would be apt here to quote (in part) our answer to a letter published in our issue of April 19, 1980. "...When the chain-snatchers do their nefarious work... many a woman scoffs: it can't happen to me. We'd like to say, let it happen to them and they might learn the lesson — but, alas, it might be too late." Unfortunately, it was, indeed, too late for Shantadevi.

DANGEROUS SMOKE

3rd PRIZE

In her recent letter on Mosquito Coils, your reader has obviously confused 'Parthenium' (an obnoxious weed popularly referred to as congress grass) for 'Pyrethrum' which is associated with active insecticidal constituents termed 'pyrethrins'. Because of their low human toxicity 'pyrethrins' are common constituents of mosquito coils. As the safety of 'pyrethrins' has been accepted, pyrethrum extracts are usual components of household insecticidal formulations. It is a moot point, however, whether the artefacts of thermal decomposition emitting from the burning tip of a mosquito coil are safe, especially when one is exposed to involuntary but prolonged inhalation of products of combustion.

It has been reported in scientific literature that the tars in smoke from burning mosquito coils are essentially similar to the tars in cigarette smoke with, however, a greater concentration of a suspected carcinogen in the former. Recently, the Consumer Guidance Society of India conducted a survey on the performance of mosquito coils, the safety aspect being based on a subjective evaluation of the user's sensory reaction. The safety of mosquito coils is thus still open to question.

N. G. WAGLE, Bombay

This is most interesting. At a time when anti-smoking campaigns are even talking about how women can get cancer because their husbands smoke, it would be remiss not to go into the dangers represented by mosquito coils whose fumes must be inhaled by countless people.

GOLD? NEVER!

I was shocked to read about the murder of Mrs. Shantadevi in a first class ladies' compartment of a Bombay local. I feel sad for the husband and son, but was it not stupidity on the part of an educated lady, knowing well the fate of women nowadays wearing gold ornaments and travelling with 8 to 10 tolas of gold on her person? Let us change our thinking after this case. We should not laugh at or tease others who do not wear gold — in fact we should start looking down on all women wearing gold. Let Bombay women take the lead... instead of indulging in morchas and strikes.

MRS. B. MEENA PARTHASARTHI, Nasik

Educated or not, gold is the eternal lure. We wonder if even the loss of this bright and innocent life will make women put away their gold ornaments. You are so right: women have had this habit of looking down on those who do not wear gold or cannot afford it. Why not turn the tables?

PLAYING THE GAME...

2nd PRIZE

When Gavaskar hits a century between the wickets, the news flashes across the world. He is lauded and applauded. We Indians feel proud of him, and even if we are not cricketers, appreciate the fact that he plays the game well.

Some months ago, a certain gentleman in Bombay, a retired officer of the P. & T. Department, hit a century (of years, not runs) between 1880 and 1980. Neither the newspapers nor the P. & T. Department — that vast network of communications in our country — emitted so much as a whisper about this landmark in the life of one of its retired personnel who, along with so many like him in the days of the Raj, gave to Government service the spit and polish and efficiency with which it was then characterised and known.

Had this grand, old gentleman achieved his century during the Raj he would, at least, have been the recipient of a gracious acknowledgment from the British authorities. Did our P. &. T. Dept., the Minister for Communications or, for that matter, the President of India make any such gesture to this veteran who has not just run between the wickets, but has fought the good fight of life? And what about our numerous newspapers who make so much of a commoner who kisses a prince, or a Miss India, or a boxer who boasts, and a film star who takes a second wife — did they care to report this century?

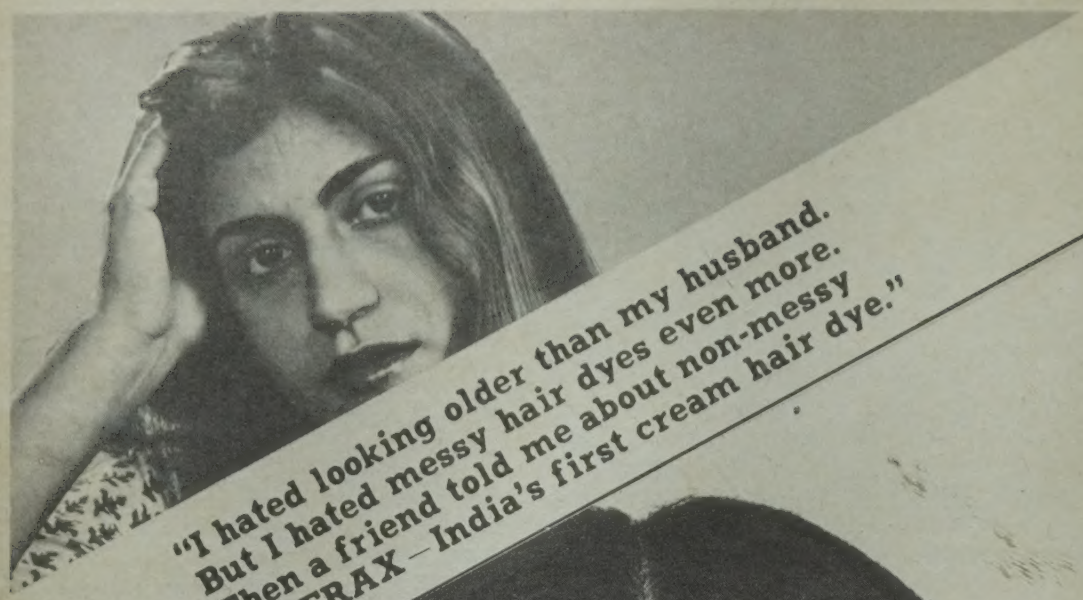
What is our value for one who lives dutifully, serenely and graciously — nothing spectacular, except a little honesty, a little courage, a little living... for a hundred years.

MRS. BERNADETTE PINTO, Bombay

Well, it is so easy to forget, to ignore, to belittle, when the pace of life is fast and only the rising sun merits a "namaskaar". But, yes, we feel sad at this turn of events and regret the passing of old values and the true meaning of life.

ASK THE DOCTOR

Dr. Kanchan Nadkarni, M.D., who has completed her post-graduation from the renowned All-India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, currently works as a consultant in the Chemotherapy department of the Tata Memorial (Cancer) Hospital, Bombay. Dr. Nadkarni will answer your queries on medical issues in this column every fortnight. Your question should be addressed to: Ask The Doctor, C/o Eve's Weekly, and MUST BE accompanied by this coupon, which will appear every fortnight.



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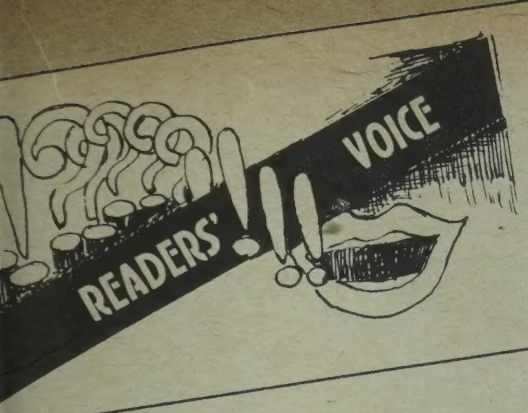

Most articles raise a question, a comment or at least a criticism. Write them down and mail them to us.

AMEND LAW ON BIGAMY

Regarding the issue of bigamy (Dec. 13) I feel it is the only crime in our country that can be committed very openly and in which the culprit goes scot free. This is because of the basic flaw in the Hindu law which states that when the second marriage is consummated or solemnised, irrespective of its legality, only the parties who are directly affected by the marriage — that is, the first wife and the adult children, if any — can institute legal proceedings against the offender. Therefore even though it's crystal clear that the second marriage is an illegal one, nothing can be done unless the first wife moves the court.

It's really astonishing to note that nowadays a second marriage has become a fashion or a sort of a status symbol! And here too the first wife does not muster enough courage to move the court even when she is sure that the case will ultimately be decided in her favour. It's shocking to note that when the second marriage is celebrated in public with much pomp and fashion, the court is forced to watch helplessly as it does not have any direct power to arrest the criminal for bigamy.

It's therefore high time that the law is suitably amended and I hereby second the suggestions brought out by Rita Rahimtoola.

S. KRISHNA KUMAR, Bombay.

SEX KNOWLEDGE?

Your article "Where Do Babies Come From?" (Dec. 13) was worth reading. Unlike in the West, it is unfortunate that sex in India is yet to be considered as a biological need and a subject which needs a thorough understanding. It is the self-imposed rigid code of conduct and morality which has led our children and adolescents to seek sex knowledge through cheap books or through friends. This has effectively ruined the overage Indian's chances of enjoying a healthy sex life devoid of guilt.

K. S. RAMAN, New Delhi.

BLACK SHEEP EVERYWHERE

I disagree with the allegations against chartered accountants contained in Mrs. P. Joshi's letter published in 'Your Page' (Dec. 13). Black sheep are found in every profession and our profession is no exception. The reader seems to have jumped to the conclusion based on individual experiences. In fact, our profession is playing an active role in building the national economy by helping the government to achieve its fiscal objectives and by guiding the general public to their rights and duties under various laws framed by the government.

ANIL CHOPRA, New Delhi.

GETTING AWAY WITH BIGAMY

Regarding the articles on bigamy (Dec. 13), it is high time that the government framed new laws which are applicable to all sections of people who live in this country.

Let people live in this country as Indians and not as Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and Christians.

Our defective laws are the root cause of communal disharmony. During British rule at railway stations we used to hear shouts of "Hindu pani", "Muslim pani", Hindu tea" and "Muslim tea". We did away with that. Why? Because we thought it communal. Then why should we now have separate rules and regulations for personal laws?

GIRDHER, Bombay.

ISSUE OF FEBRUARY 14, 1981

HOW TO KEEP FIT

It has nothing to do with age. Old men and women of 60 and above are bouncing with health and energy while young teenagers loll around, listless and "tired". The secret of staying fit is to follow a sensible diet, eschew "junk" foods and maintain an enquiring mind and a young-at-heart attitude.

A DELHI HEALTH CLUB

A profile of Mahajbeer Sultana, who runs a well-known health club in Delhi.

OLD IN YEARS, YOUNG AT HEART

Chats with a cross-section of men and women, who prove that their age has not been a bar in remaining sprightly.

KEEP FIT IDEAS

Popular worshippers of the body beautiful reveal that it's equally essential to keep the mind free of cobwebs. With tips on the right exercises.

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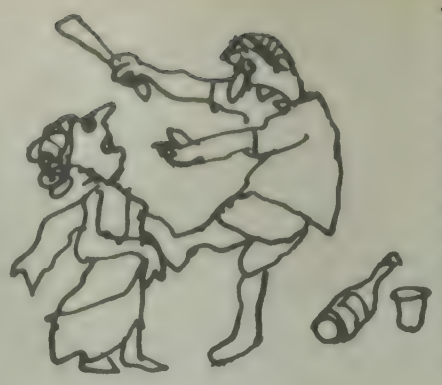


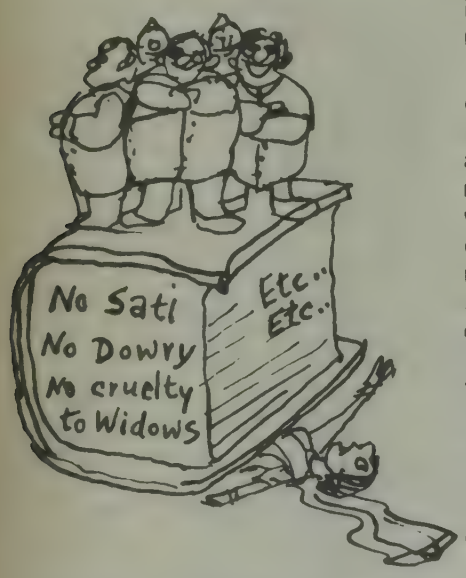
DRIVEN TO DEATH

Ila Pathak

So many commit suicide. What makes them give up the gift of life? Why do more women commit suicide than men? And there are so many deaths by accident reported. Are all these cases really suicides and accidents? Some of them no doubt are, but in the case of quite a few there are stories of torture — physical, mental or both — which drove the victim to death. And in many a case neighbours tell of actual murder of a wife or daughter-in-law passed off as suicide or accident.

To look into the reasons for the large number of suicides among women, the Gujarat government instituted a committee to make a survey in 1964. It comprised social workers, sociologists, psychologists, M.L.As, retired members of the judiciary, and others. The police department provided the necessary data which was processed by the Bureau of Economics and Statistics. The Committee examined the reasons for suicide — socio-economic and psychological.

A similar survey was made in Saurashtra in 1955. The old Bombay State had also appointed a



three-man committee to make a similar survey in 1957. The report was made, but no action was taken on it as Bombay was bifurcated thereafter into the two separate states of Maharashtra and Gujarat.

The survey of 1964 revealed an alarming state of affairs. And even the large number revealed was not the correct figure. The information was supplied by the police department by consulting its records. But then, firstly all cases of suicide are not reported to the police, secondly, quite a few cases reported as accidents could be really cases of suicide, and thirdly, quite a few cases of murder might have been passed off as suicide. So the actual number of suicides could be substantially different from those shown in police records. But the survey was exhaustive and records many aspects of this gruesome problem. It has investigated the number, religion, caste, age group, caste and community, educational status and economic class of victims.

It was found that cases of suicide were more common in villages as compared to urban areas. The largest number of women were Hindus, and men and women of the Kanabi, Koli, Patel castes tended to commit suicide more than other castes. Harijans, Rajputs and Brahmins were fewer. But among all the castes the number of women far exceeded that of men. And suicide among the illiterate was more common than among the educated. As education increases, the number of cases of suicide seems to decline.

The reasons for suicide were many — physical disability (caused by long illness) insomnia, mental disorder, social and economic troubles and domestic unhappiness. Those committing suicide because of physical disability or mental disorder were mostly above the age of fifty. Those who committed suicide because of unemployment or inadequate income and other economic causes were very few. And those who ended their life because of domestic discord were the largest. And the number of women committing suicide for this reason was double that of men. Among the many social causes listed were disappointment in love, loss of social status, failure

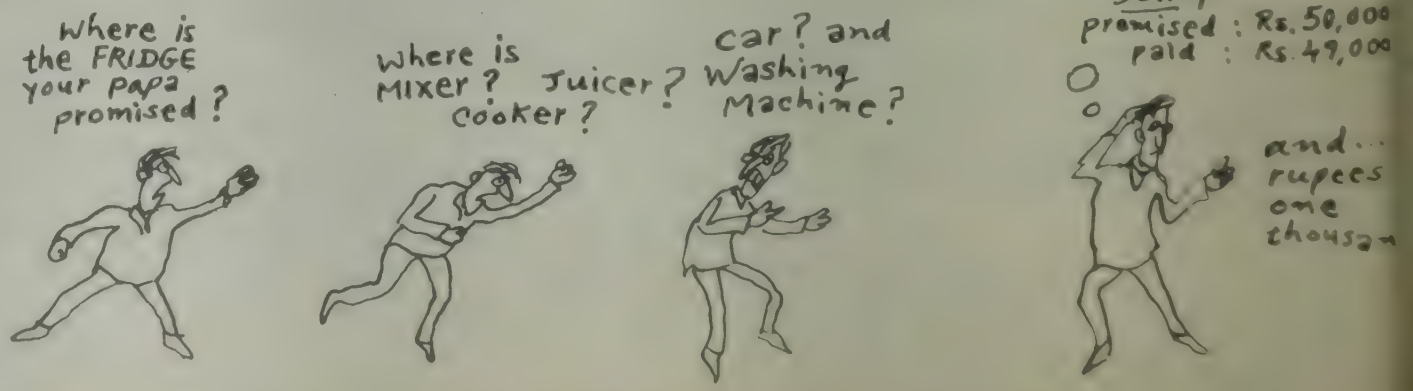
in examination, pregnancy before marriage and quarrels about property. But these too were not very frequent.

It is significant that the largest number of the persons who committed suicide were 20 to 24 years old. The next in number was the age group of 25 to 29. The third was of adolescents between ten and 15. This shows the large number of married women who are so unhappy that they prefer death even at that young age when normally life should hold so much pleasure and promise for them. That the age group of 20 to 24 is the most vulnerable also points to the fact that five or six years of married life were spent in a sincere effort to adjust to the new situation, before choosing suicide.

Young women in traditional families have little choice in their marriage. And if they enter families with little regard to the newcomer's feelings and less love, they face abuse, beating and worse, and can end it in only one way — suicide. They have no alternative. The young girls know nothing but housework and cannot even think of earning their own livelihood. Returning to their parents' home too is ruled out because of poverty or the social stigma. Their thoughts turn to death as the only surcease from their unhappy lot.

The method used by such desperate women is mostly drowning or burning. The large majority jump into a nearby well. But quite a few set fire to themselves. Hanging oneself, taking poison or jumping from a height are not chosen so often. In the earlier surveys too drowning and burning were found to be the most common methods.

In the survey, various aspects of this tragedy were discussed and a few suggestions made. Some of them relate to the law. The age of marriage ought to be increased and the provisions of the Sarda Act should be more strictly enforced. There should be the same civil law for women following all religions so that all are governed by the same rules of divorce. To give speedy justice, there should be


Where is the FRIDGE your papa promised?
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promised : Rs. 50,000
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and... rupees one thousan

YOUNG WOMEN IN TRADITIONAL FAMILIES HAVE LITTLE CHOICE IN THEIR MARRIAGE, AND IF THEY ENTER A HOME WHERE THEY FACE ABUSE, BEATING, AND WORSE, THEIR THOUGHTS TURN TO DEATH AS THE ONLY RELEASE FROM THEIR UNHAPPY LOT. A SURVEY CONDUCTED IN GUJARAT REVEALS THAT NOT ONLY DO SUICIDE CASES GO UNREPORTED, BUT MANY REPORTED AS ACCIDENTS, ARE ACTUALLY CASES OF SUICIDE OR MURDER

separate family courts and in the court there ought to be a marriage counsellor. Suits for maintenance must be quickly disposed of by the courts. Divorce cases should be allowed to be filed in the lower courts. The Act prohibiting dowry must be strictly enforced.

In every district there must be a committee specially appointed to inquire into cases of suicide. In cases claimed to be deaths by accident and in cases where death is caused in suspicious circumstances, there should be a detailed inquiry and during the inquiry a social worker of the area should be present.

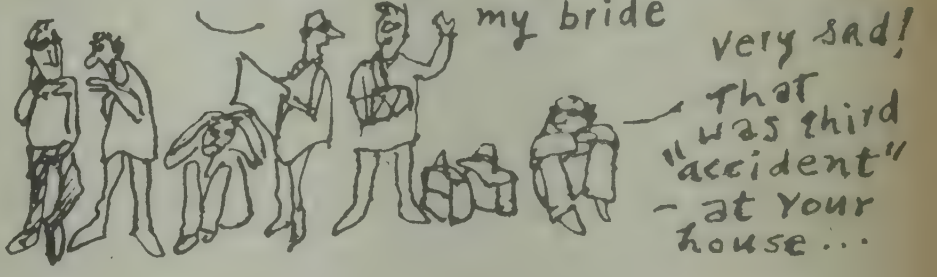
Homes ought to be opened for women who find life intolerable, for those who have tried to commit suicide, for those disabled, old, and orphans. ,Women should be educated in their legal, social and civic rights. Education up to a certain standard should be made compulsory and women should be given training to be self-reliant. These homes should have a qualified and trained marriage counsellor and psychiatric social worker.

The police should investigate all cases of death by alleged accident and suicide and post-mortems should be performed in all such cases to find out the real cause of death. If the police can get the support of the leaders of the village, probably their inquiry would be much more effective.

So much for cases in which discord has already arisen in the woman's domestic life. Recommendations have also been made to prevent such discord. One of them is that the young should be given more freedom to choose their partners in life. Nuclear families must be favoured in place of joint living. In joint families the elderly should be persuaded to treat the daughter-in-law as a member of the household and the custom of dowry, etc. should be eradicated.

Towards achieving this it is considered essential to give more education to women and sex-education to the young, both men and women. Counselling centres must be made available in the villages. It is significant that the findings were similar in the earlier surveys too.

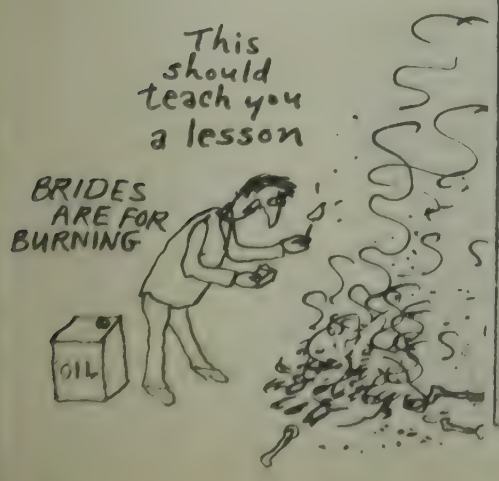
When the survey was published, those who read and heard about it came to believe that the rate of suicide is particularly high in Gujarat. This however is not true. In the report a table giving comparative data showed that among other states, Madras recorded the largest number of suicides. Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal registered more cases than Gujarat. while Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra vary a little. But these cannot be considered as a final picture of the suicide situation in the various states.Those figures are collected from police records and so a State with an inefficient police force can show a lower figure. For example, the Madras police appears to be more vigilant. Otherwise, can one believe that as against 19 cases of suicide in Madras there is just one in Rajasthan!



SUICIDE OR MURDER?

A woman of 25 was reported to have committed suicide. She had been married six years earlier. The couple had no difficulty in adjusting to each other, but the in-laws tortured the daughter-in-law so much that she returned to her parents. After four years of such separation, the husband came to claim his wife with the promise to look after her well. The parents were only too glad to send her back. A few weeks later they heard that she had died of accidental burns. When Charumati Yoddha, well-known social worker of Gujarat, made inquiries she found that at the time of the death only the husband and wife were at home. The husband had not called anybody to help save his wife when the fire was consuming her. The accident was said to have occurred while the victim was filling a hurricane lamp with kerosene. The dead woman had no clothes on. It was obvious that there could have been no accident, but either murder or suicide after being tortured.

In another case, when Charumati reached the place of death, the burned dead body of the woman was found hanging from a peg with both hands tied up. The body was charred from below with lesser burns on the face and hands. Could this too be suicide? Or was it reported to be suicide because evidence for a conviction of murder was not available?



The police in Gujarat appear to be working fairly efficiently. Social workers and the government are also alive to this issue. That is why a report like this was possible. As a result of these reports the Gujarat government established marriage counselling centres and homes for destitute women which have been of great help to a large number. But what has been done is far from enough. Much more needs to be done to eradicate injustice to women and the shame on Indian society.

Cartoons Courtesy: A Women's Calendar 1981. Brought out by "Reaching out" a feminist group.

Ah! TAJ

TASTE
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Blended just the way
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A BOTANICAL PARADISE

Ganga Shenoy

The Bhavan's campus at Munshi Nagar, Andheri (West), Bombay, established in 1946, has been turned into a botanist's "treasure-island" over a period of three decades, covering over 50 acres of land. The campus has four large green-houses set up most economically with wooden and bamboo poles and thatching of palm leaves, having variegated and rare hot-house specimens like orchids, begonia, azaleas, camellias and several others brought by Dr. Kanu Patel, Vice-Principal and Head of the Botany Department of the Bhavan's College. A beautiful pool adorns the campus. Colourful flower beds, a rose garden, a variety of plants and bonsai are cultivated impeccably, the cuttings of which are sold at reasonable rates.

Bright foliage and glistening leaves in the Bhavan's premises provide a congenial atmosphere for plant enthusiasts, tourists, school and college students, thereby inculcating a sense of appreciation of nature and appropriate ways of nurturing it.

LEFT : A beautiful pool, Japanese style, with aquatic plants and mussaendas.

ABOVE: A close-up of orchids — dendrobium.

TOP : Pink and white mussaendas with amaranthus in the background.

A SUICIDE A DAY

IF STATISTICS ARE TO BE BELIEVED, SUICIDAL DESPERADOES ABOUND IN THE GARDEN CITY OF BANGALORE WHICH HAS THE HIGHEST RATE OF SUICIDE IN THE COUNTRY. FAMILY TENSIONS, MARITAL DISCORD AND FINANCIAL CRISES ARE SOME OF THE REASONS

Preeth I. Biddapa

Once upon a time, not so long ago, life in Bangalore was a relaxed and gracious affair. Now, lovers of this still beautiful city have to contend with the festering sore of the highest rate of suicide in the country. Unbelievable but true, if statistics are to be believed — suicidal desperadoes abound in the garden city (Attempted suicides in 1979, 1017).

Dr. Miss K. Satyavathi of NIMHANS (National Institute of Mental and Neuro-Sciences), who has specialised in suicidology since 1961, pointed out that most suicides are caused by a combination of factors. "No one cause," she said, "can be pinpointed as causing the high incidence of suicide. However, changing socio-economic conditions are largely responsible for creating conflicts between modern and traditional attitudes."

Bangalore is still in the throes of urbanisation and industrialisation. "Upheavals" she said, "are caused when a conservative, close knit society is broken up into a conglomerate of heterogenous groups. Bangalore is still rural in outlook at the periphery, becoming more sophisticated towards the heart of the town." Acclimitisation to cosmopolitan behaviour, evolving from the city's rapid growth, involves strain.

The resulting dichotomy, in addition to the environmental fall-out of the industrial revolution — overcrowding, congestion, slums, poverty, illiteracy and general lack of basic amenities — constrains and constricts the mind. The race for material goods corrodes family unity. Unbearable tensions build up in individuals bewildered by the battering forces of change that have shaken this verdant city which on the surface appears so deceptively tranquil.

In such a set-up, lack of meaningful communication and sympathetic understanding from family or spouse, aggravate mental breakdowns, hasten depression and suicidal tendencies. Indeed, family tensions, followed by marital discord are responsible for most suicides (23 per cent and 14 per cent respectively). Other causes are mental and physical illness and a combination of socio-economic factors such as family quarrels, financial crises, loss of prestige, social disgrace, anger, etc.

Shockingly, more young people in the age group 11 to 30 (58 per cent) are driven to suicide unlike in the West, where older people considered burdens to society and uncared for by their children, or left in Old Age Homes, take their lives.

Rigid attitudes of elder members of the family is rampant, and cause a high percentage of suicides. Respect for age, ironically, has led to tyrannical suppression of youthful initiative.

Also disturbing is that the highest incidence is among single men, followed closely by married women. The former mostly suffer on account of financial difficulty and the latter from myriad problems almost in-built in society, such as insufficient dowry, neglect and harassment by in-laws or spouses.

The most common method of committing suicide in Bangalore is by consuming poisonous insecticides like Tik 20 or Dalf. This is in marked contrast to the West where barbiturates are popular. Suicide by drowning or burning, though dramatised and highlighted in the press, is not as common as suicide by swallowing poison.

Tragically, since the largest number of suicides is in the lower income group, help for those who have attempted suicide or want to attempt it is not easily available over the telephone as in the West.

The Medico Pastoral Association in Bangalore has done yeoman service to bring down the high rate of suicide. Concerned by the loss of young lives and juvenile mental illness, it set up a Half Way Home, the only one of its kind in Asia. Literally, it is meant to be a home half way between mental institutions and a patient's home. Patients cured of mental illness but still requiring emotional reassurance and strength to adapt to home environment are gradually rehabilitated by the "befriending and thereauptic treatment" given in the Half-Way Home. A Suicide Advisory Panel under the chairmanship of Dr. S. S. Jairam, helps counsel and rehabilitate those who have attempted suicide.

Since a large number of those who attempt suicide repeat their attempts (1 to 3 times more) and since 41 per cent of actual suicides have a history of earlier attempts, the Association decided to offer help to those who attempt suicide as well as "infuse the public with anti-suicidal attitudes to help prevent suicides." A suicide prevention programme was offered to religious organisations, medical colleges, hospitals and medical associations, industries, clubs and hostels. However, of the 200 volunteers who took the course, only four remain dedicated to the cause of suicide counselling and prevention.

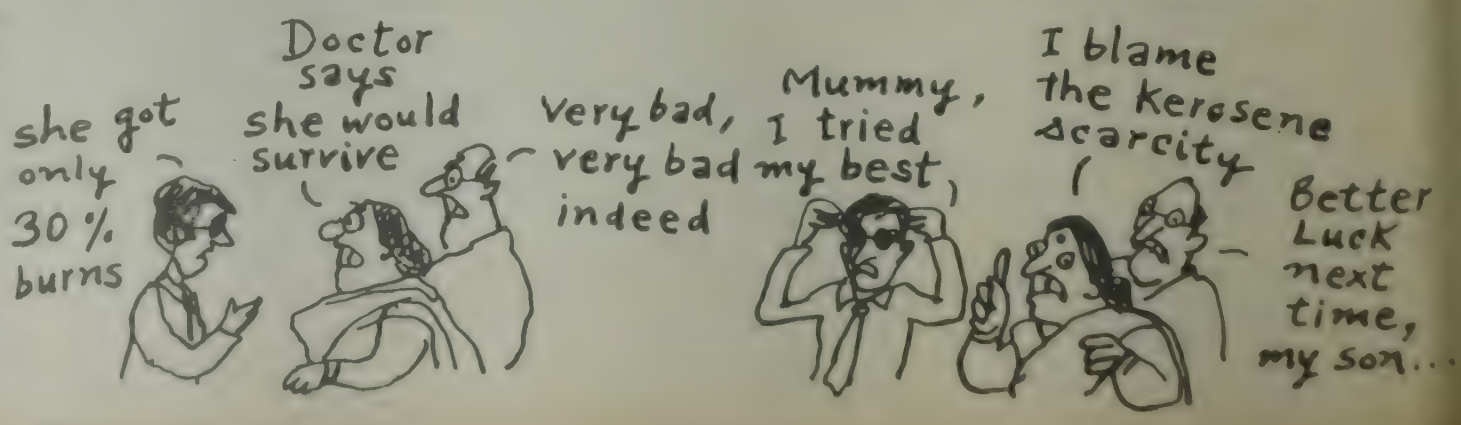
Mr. M. Nizamuddin, then Deputy-Inspector General of Police, who is also on the Advisory Panel, remarked that it was difficult to get people mentally equipped to tackle suicide prevention work. It is creditable that police officials also attended the course as advised by Mr. Nizamuddin.

While suicide is a fait accompli, attempting suicide is a crime under Section 309 of the I.P.C., and so all cases of attempted suicide have to be notified to the police. Many of those who attempt suicide fall within the ambit of this law and try to prevent detection. Either their families do not report the case for fear of social stigma, or an attempt is made to make it appear an accident, or unscrupulous doctors agree not to notify the police — for a price. Actual statistics of suicides is hence difficult to come by. Attempted suicides are approximately 10 to 20 times of actual suicides. Miss Suzie Dhanraj, psychologist at Half Way Home, lamented that suicide counselling is not availed of by those who are toying with the idea of suicide because they are afraid that they may get entangled with the law.

Attempts to repeal Sec. 309 were consequently made, and recommended by the 42nd Law Commission, but this is yet to be approved by Parliament. Criminal lawyers express misgivings about the repeal as they feel if the punitive aspect is removed, there will be no restraint on committing suicide.

Most suicidal people give indications of their intent. Expressions such as "perhaps there won't be a next time," are common according to Dr. Satyavathi, and are cries for help, if only they were heeded.

Arousing awareness is therefore vital. Society shares the responsibility for loss of life by suicide, so values need to be changed. As a young girl who attempted suicide and was urged to go for counselling declared, "It is not I but everyone around me who require counselling."


she got only 30% burns
Doctor says she would survive
very bad, very bad indeed
Mummy, I tried my best,
I blame the kerosene scarcity
Better Luck next time, my son...

Courtesy : A Women's Calender 1981.

Women participating in the "kalash yatra" carrying offerings to their "goddess".

SATI:
a disturbing revival

A REGISTERED ORGANISATION ACTUALLY EXISTS IN DELHI WHICH ANNUALLY CELEBRATES A SATI COMMITTED SEVERAL HUNDRED YEARS AGO. OBVIOUSLY THE ATTITUDE TO SATI TODAY IS STILL MEDIEVAL AND SUCH AN ATTITUDE NEEDS TO BE RELENTLESSLY OPPOSED

Gouri Salvi

Several hundred years ago, the story goes, a young woman in Jhunjhunu in Rajasthan, was accompanying her husband to his home for the first time after her marriage. They were attacked by some "Muslim invaders" and her husband lost his life battling them. But rather than continue on her way, which she knew was beset with more such bands of desperados, and not wanting to risk molestation and rape, the young virgin bride is said to have set fire to her husband's pyre and immolated herself on it. This was glorified into a facile myth built around the fidelity and supreme self-sacrifice, displayed by the young woman and she was deified as Shri Rani Sati.

Several hundred years later, in the pulsating by-lanes of Delhi's thriving Chandni Chowk, in a shop-cum-Rani Sati Seva Sangh office, sat a group of very incensed, middle class Bania traders. "Shri Rani Sati was the first and only woman from our Bania community to have performed Sati," one of those in the group explained. "There have been hundreds of Rajput women who have done this, but Rani Sati was the only one from among our caste. Hence she became something unique. And we have worshipped her as goddess Durga — as one of her many avatars. Is there anything wrong in that? We glorify the concept of fidelity behind this particular woman's committing Sati — remember, she was a virgin — but we do not condone or encourage the practice of Sati in any way. Then why did these women's organisations and these MPs make such a drama out of it?"

He was of course referring to the recent problems they ran into in Delhi when their religious procession was confronted by some feminists, representatives of the Indian Housewives' Federation and some women MPs. The Shri Rani Sati Seva Sangh (as their registered organisation is called) has been commemorating this day of their "goddess" for the last three years in Delhi itself. They passed on to me, as proof of this, souvenirs in the form of diaries of those occasions. Ironically, each one of those souvenirs carried messages of good wishes from the likes of the Vice-President of India!

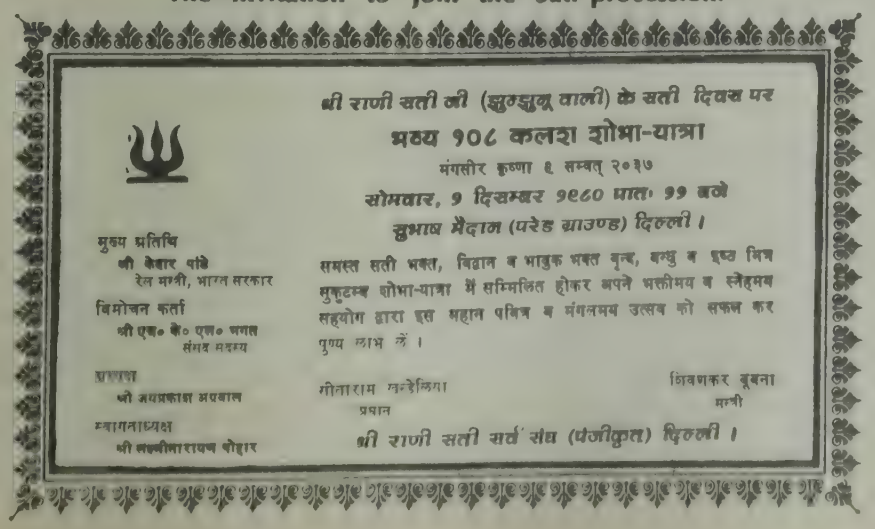
This year, as a preliminary to building a temple to Rani Sati in Delhi, they had decided to take out what is known as a "kalash yatra," a procession wherein 108 Marwari women, decked in their traditional Rajasthani finery, would carry pots of water on their heads to be offered to the "goddess" at a small ceremony. This procession was scheduled to start on December 1 at 11 a.m. Just before that, the police, claim the devotees, warned them of the anti-Sati procession that would obstruct their progress. "You do not know," warned the police, "the type these other women are. We have dealt with them, so we know. They are the sort who, if we try to stop their processions, put their hands in our collars and rip our shirts off. Your women are after all docile housewives. So why do you wish to invite trouble unnecessarily?"

But the Shri Rani Sati Seva Sangh, having planned the annual puja for so long, were not to be thwarted. They promised the police that they would be very peaceful; all they wanted was to perform their puja. As expected, the procession was confronted by a small (but vociferous) group of anti-Sati women who tried their best to stop some of the Marwari women from joining the ceremony. One of the Sangh men described the skirmish in self-righteous tones. "Those women...God knows who they were... most were Christian and Muslims I think... they kept telling our women, 'Don't go there, they'll burn you.' When our women tried to explain to them that it was only a puja, they just would not listen. And then when they tried to stop our puja, our women got very wild also, and started saying all kinds of things to them — you know, things like, 'You women are used to having seven, eight men at a time, what do you understand about piety and fidelity?' And such other things. What could they do? They too were annoyed. After all, how can you interfere with anybody's puja like that? Don't we have the freedom of worship guaranteed to us?"

Interestingly, this incident was played up prominently by the daily press, which described it in terms of a battle between the traditional and the modern, and described the Sati Seva Sangh as a new organisation that was encouraging the practice of Sati. But even more interesting was the fact that the incident was mentioned in Parliament and Mrs. Indira Gandhi stated that the temple would not be allowed to be constructed. The Sangh people are left stunned at the dramatic turn the events have taken. They say they cannot understand why this should have happened this year, when the worship of Rani Sati has been going on publicly for so many hundreds of years among the Aggarwals and certainly for a few years in the capital city.

Continued on page 49

The invitation to join the Sati procession.



श्री राणी सती जी (झुन्झुनू वाली) के सती दिवस पर

भव्य १०८ कलश शोभा-यात्रा

मंगसीर कृष्णा ६ सम्वत् २०३७

सोमवार, १ दिसम्बर १९८० प्रातः ११ बजे

सुभाष मैदान (परेड ग्राउण्ड) दिल्ली।

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रेल मन्त्री, भारत सरकार

विमोचन कर्ता
श्री एच० के० एल० भगत
संसद सदस्य

प्रधान
श्री जयप्रकाश अग्रवाल

स्वागताध्यक्ष
श्री लक्ष्मीनारायण पोद्दार

समस्त सती भक्त, विद्वान व भावुक भक्त वृन्द, बन्धु व इष्ट मित्र सकुटम्ब शोभा-यात्रा में सम्मिलित होकर अपने भक्तिमय व स्नेहमय सहयोग द्वारा इस महान पवित्र व मंगलमय उत्सव को सफल कर पुण्य लाभ लें।

सीताराम खन्देलिया
प्रधान

शिवशंकर डूबना
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Grave physical illness was the reason why this woman from a well-to-do locality in Panaji drowned herself.

THE DESPERATE ONES

Cecilia D'Souza

The police fished out her bloated corpse from the Mandovi river. Inmates of the boarding house at Ilhas, Goa, where the dead girl had stayed, identified her as 18-year-old Mala, a packer at a factory. A post-mortem examination showed that the girl was pregnant. The father of the unknown child was presumably her boy friend with whom she had gone on a nocturnal stroll in the evening before her suicide. Mala had chosen death by drowning as a quick solution to her predicament.

The overall suicide rate in the Union territory of Goa is nine per lakh of population per year. Suicides among women, however, have risen in the last three years; 1977 to 1979 — 204 females against 156 males. In 1977, 73 women took their lives; the corresponding number of male suicides was 48. In 1978, the figure was 53 females to 54 men, but in 1979, the suicide rate for women was 78 against 54 men.

Suicide statistics for the period under survey (1977 to 1979) show a contrary trend to those of a decade ago. In 1968-77, of the suicides, 63 per cent were males and only 37 per cent females. The percentage of female suicides in Goa in the last three years approximates that in North India where traditionally more women than men do violence to themselves.

Suicide is a complex human act with multiple motivations. Religion, social mores and environment have a bearing on the act of self-destruction. Goan psychiatrists, Dr. S. D. Sharma and Dr. R. Gopalkrishna, said that Hindus do not consider suicide a crime, mental illness or a sin.

MENTAL ILLNESS IS THE MAIN CAUSE FOR FEMALE SUICIDE IN GOA. VICTIMS OF MANIA, DEPRESSION OR NEUROSIS, WOMEN SEEK RELIEF IN DEATH

The **Brahma Purana,** a Hindu sacred text, even justifies five kinds of suicide. Christians however deem suicide a serious sin: hence the lower incidence of self-destruction among them.

The causes of female suicide in Goa during 1977-79 were mental derangement, chronic physical disease, domestic conflict (in this order). Frustration in love, property disputes, loss of dear ones or social status, and failure in examination, were the lesser reasons for suicide.

Poverty or unemployment were not important causes for the taking of one's life as in the rest of India. Only three women committed suicide owing to poverty in 1977-79. There is no record of any female suicide as a result of unemployment during this period.

The reasons are not far to seek. The Hindu orphan finds protection in the Hindu joint family which is still entrenched in Goa. Religious and social institutions take care of fatherless and destitute girls among other communities. The very poor subsist by growing a few vegetables in their small plot of fertile soil. Firewood is free as the monsoon forests on the hills are a perennial source of fuel. The beggar is provided a dish of rice conjee (porridge) and shelter in an outhouse by the charitably inclined.

An agro-based economy ensures gainful employment for women in the fields. The growth of factories and hotels provides jobs for the urban population. Loneliness and destitution, the major cause of suicide among aged women in the West, do not lead to female suicide in Goa. Scores of old-age homes in this tiny 3,400-sq. km. territory feed, clothe and shelter the indigent aged.

Mental illness is the main cause for female suicide in Goa. They are victims of mania, clinical depression, neurosis and split personality. According to psychologists, mental derangement is the outcome of the lack of one or more vital needs — love, a sense of togetherness security, congenial environment and individual response to the strains and stresses of existence. "The image the Goan projects of a relaxed, happy-go-lucky person is not wholly true," said Dr. S. D. Sharma. He was recently appointed director of the Institute of Psychiatry and Human Behaviour, Panaji. "Goans, especially those in single or nuclear families, have a low threshold of endurance, and are likely to crack up under a severe condition of stress."

"Women, the more emotional sex," he continued, "often react adversely when uprooted from the family or a familiar environment." Children are generally cosseted in Goa, the adolescent girl jealously guarded against harsh reality and relationships with men. When the girls leave their village to take up urban jobs, the absence of parental protection and the accompanying increase of freedom subject them to city hazards and tensions.

"On the other hand, the young married woman who moves into her husband's household faces problems of adjustment. The age distribution — 18 to 30 years — denotes that the suicidal act in this group was the outcome of frustrations in love or abrasive inter-personal relationship."

As a matter of fact, for the decade 1968 to 1977, domestic conflict ranked as the second largest causative factor in female suicide. It was reduced to third place in the period under review, 1977-79. Police records show that there were hardly any "dowry deaths" as a result of strained relations with spouse or in-laws because of the lack or inadequacy of a dowry. The Goan bride traditionally brings to her husband's family a suitable marriage portion in cash or kind. Its value is settled bevond dispute before the wedding takes place. The usual reason for self-immolation are bitter quarrels with in-laws or husband which gain in rancour over the years and drive a woman to seek relief in death. The method of suicide is usually drowning in a well or river

Love affairs, where a young girl thinks that life is well worth losing for love, and liaisons between married women and other men, accounted for 10 suicides in the 1977-79 year span. Predictably, the women were all in the 18 to 30 age group.

In Goa, arranged marriages are still the norm. So parental objection to a daughter's preferred suitor, because of a difference of religion, caste or social standing, makes girls take their lives. A large number of young husbands serve as seamen on merchant ships. And during the last three years, hundreds of Goans have sought employment in West Asia. Their absence from home for months or years at a time, leads the women to seek satisfaction of their sexual needs by taking lovers. Pregnancy in such circumstances means

Continued on page 39

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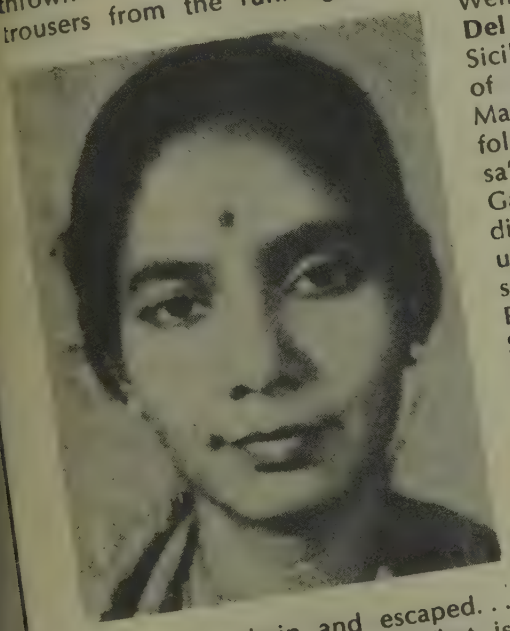
SANDOZ

daCunha-S-22

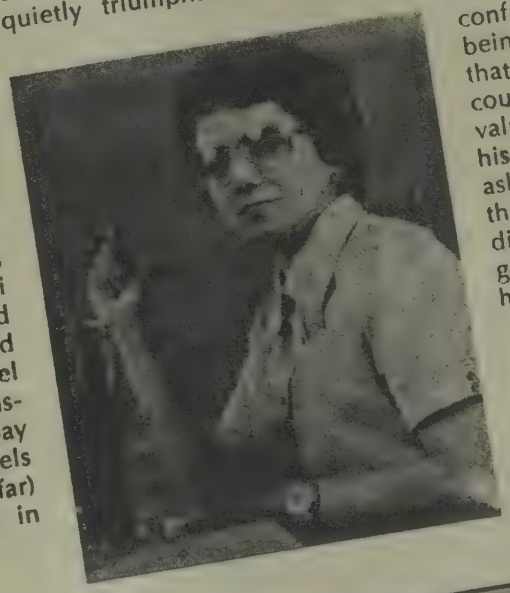
THE murder in broad daylight of Professor **Shantadevi Narayanan** has sent shock waves through the city of Bombay. Prof. Narayanan, said to be a quiet, unassuming person, had boarded the fast local train at Bandra to go to Andheri. During the 10-minute journey, a man had come in, cut her jugular vein, thrown away his bloodstained trousers from the running train,

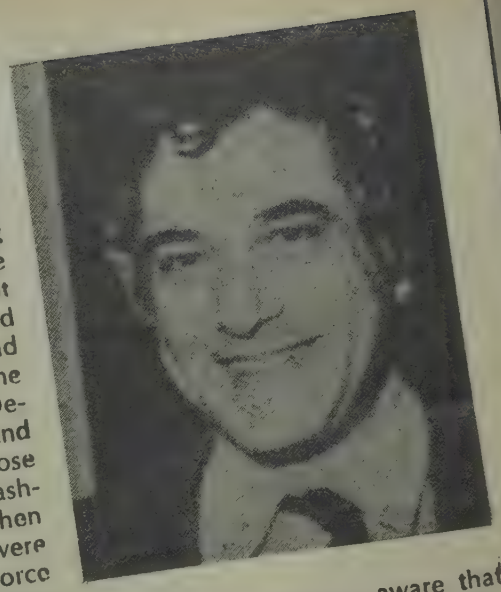


pulled the chain and escaped... all in broad daylight. What is agitating Bombayites is that while the city is in the grip of a crime wave, the railway police and the city police are waging a cold war against each other. First, they said that no ornaments were stolen so there was suspicion that she might have been killed by a vengeful student. Then a report said that Rs. 4,000 worth of jewellery was stolen from her person, which was then corrected to Rs. 2,500. The question is, are the police capable of catching the thief or not? And even if they catch him, will he be adequately punished? Remember the four "goondas" who murdered the young, helpless **Manda Patankar** some years ago? One judge sentenced them to death, another commuted it to life sentence because they had committed the murder under the influence of alcohol and were young. One now hears that the four criminals didn't even spend the requisite 14 years in jail and were let off after some time. If this is the lenient treatment meted out to such heartless criminals, then where is the deterrent?

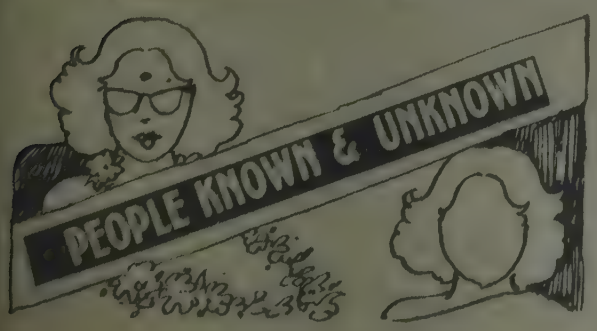
A 79-year-old man called **Shanti Das** died recently in Spain while on a holiday. So what's new, you might say. Well, his real name was **Lanza Del Vasto.** He came from a noble Sicilian family, and he was one of the best known disciples of Mahatma Gandhi in Europe, who followed his principles of "ahimsa" to the end. Del Vasto met Gandhiji while travelling in India in the late 1930s. He came under his spell and was an instant convert. He returned to Paris and was trapped in the Second World War. After the war, Del Vasto organised a number of peaceful political campaigns in France, including a campaign of peasant farmers in Larzac province to prevent the army from taking their land. And needless to say, he succeeded.

WHOEVER dreamt that a worthy successor to Agatha Christie would turn out to be an Indian? **Freny Olbrich,** nee Dastoor, a Bombay Parsi married to a German and settled in Scotland, has won the award for the best British crime novel of 1979. Freny has created Inspector DeSouza of the Bombay police (she's written three novels starring the same hero so far) who sets about solving crime in his own fashion. In "DeSouza In Stardust", his investigations naturally take him to the heart of Bombay's film world, for, whoever heard of a Bombay without its tinsel town glamour? Freny says that she took to writing thrillers only because she thought she was doing something original, in the sense that the setting was Bombay. "I did not know about H. R. Keating and his Inspector Ghote. If I had known I might never have come up with DeSouza." Why DeSouza of the Bombay police and not a Maharashtrian? "I chose Desouza rather than a Maharashtrian because at that time (when she was in India) there were many Goans in the police force holding senior positions, and also because I had more Goan colleagues, so I was more familiar with the way their minds worked." The details of how the police worked, she got from her father, who was the police surgeon in Bombay many years ago. The rest, Freny owes to her memory. Incidentally, Freny began writing when the school where she was teaching went on strike. But when she submitted her book to her publishers, they accepted it only on condition that she wrote more books with the same character. "So I had to add another chapter, in which I make him (Inspector DeSouza) withdraw his resignation," says a quietly triumphant Freny.





MOST of us are aware that book pirates in India are making tons of money by getting well-known books from abroad, then reprinting them on cheap paper and flooding the book stalls with them. By the time the books legitimately reach India, the pirate editions have already sold in their thousands and the book thieves have made a hefty packet on the deal. Publishers all over the world have tried in vain to stop this piracy. Recently, when **Peter Mayer** of Penguin books was here, he had the opportunity to meet a well-known book pirate who has illegally minted money by selling editions of Penguin books without permission. When confronted with this, far from being ashamed, the pirate said that he was doing it for his country! "This way, we save valuable foreign exchange," was his retort. But when Mr. Meyer asked him if he shared any of this wealth with the poor in India, the pirate reportedly shrugged his shoulders and left in a huff



DR. K. P. S. Khandan, a physiologist at the Government Medical College in Ahmedabad, has disclosed that his experiments reveal traces of gold in the semen of all normal men. He says that in every 70 kilo of body weight, one milligram of gold is present. This gold originates from the prostate gland and epididymis. However, Khandan warns that "if we stop the release of gold into the semen, it may make the male partner infertile." So all you greedy alchemists, lay off. But the possibilities are endless. Will the male now be made to ejaculate several times and the semen collected and refined to find gold particles? Or will the gold be prevented from entering the semen, thus developing a new contraceptive method?

Lakshmi Narayan

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Method

Hold the brush upside down and smoothen it to give it a neat appearance — snip off the straggly ends. Wind the jute string tightly round the upper part of the brush to form the neck area. Stick black fabric in place of hair, gather it up at the back, cut and divide into two parts; cut into strips and plait it. Secure the braids on either side of the head and tie up the ends. Separate a few palm leaf strips on both sides to form hands — snip off the extra length. Wind wool round these to form armlets and bangles. A small red band round the upper part forms the blouse.

Cut out eyes from black and white fabric and stick in position. Also cut out mouth and nose in red and stick in place. Stitch a skirt and secure it at the waist of the doll. The ric-rac forms the necklace round the neck. A coloured string with a bead forms a chain for the neck. Long and round beads are used for ear-rings. Paint a bindi on the forehead. Attach a loop at the back of the doll's head for hanging it on the wall.

Saroj Mittal

Photograph : Taiyeb Badshah

THE EGOISTS

Manju Mohotra

SADHNA woke up from deep slumber with a splitting headache. She knew it was the hangover from last night's party. She had had one too many. Arvind had tried to stop her from taking the last drink, but she had snubbed him. The hurt look in his eyes came back to her and she felt terribly ashamed of herself. In the evenings, nothing mattered to her more than a drink in her hand. She drank almost every day, but at parties she usually restrained herself. It was not so yesterday. She was most perturbed when she learnt that Vijay was coming for a conference in a day or two. She had to be present there too, and the very thought of coming face to face with him, made her shudder with nervousness. They had not met for over six years, but it seemed much much longer.

There was another spasm of pain in her head and she shouted for Munni, her maid. She came in with her bed-tea. "Munni, get me an Aspro from the medicine chest," said Sadhna. Handing over the tablet, Munni asked, "Memsaab, how are you feeling now?" "Why? Nothing is wrong with me," she said in dismay. "No memsaab, last night when you returned from the party you looked unwell," replied Munni.

However hard she tried, Sadhna could not recall how she had reached home. But not wanting to arouse the maid's suspicions, she said casually, "I am fine now. You go back to your work." Munni went away but in a minute was back again. "Now what?" asked Sadhna irritably. "Nothing memsaab. Arvind saab gave your car keys last night, when he brought you home," she said handing over the keys and left.

Sadhna felt as if someone had dropped a brick on her head. Arvind had done this in spite of the embarrassment she had caused him in public. She felt extremely small. She decided to apologize to him in the office. The phone bell rang. She picked up the receiver, wondering who it could be so early in the morning.

"Hello," she said lazily.

"Hello, how are you feeling this morning?' he asked in a bright chirpy voice.

"Oh, its you Arvind? Thank God! I have been feeling so miserable since morning, over my behaviour last night. I am really very very sorry," she said in an apologetic tone.

"That's okay Sadhna. Your little insults don't bother me. You know, how much I love you..." started Arvind when Sadhna cut in, "Enough. How many times have I told you that it won't get you anywhere with me? Try your luck somewhere else."

"Shall take your advice in my next life, I promise. Well, how about inviting me over for dinner?" Arvind asked in his boyish voice.

She laughed heartily and said. "Okay. You are invited for dinner tonight at my- residence at 8. Dress formal."

"Accepted," he said and she heard his carefree laughter at the other end, before replacing the receiver. She liked Arvind a lot as a friend, but he had his own ideas. She knew he doted on her. She remembered the days when she had just been posted to this place. She had arrived here from Calcutta, depressed and broken. She had left Vijay and come here. She wasn't sure if she had taken the correct decision.

Sadhna had been working as an Assistant Manager in the Calcutta branch. One morning, she watched the new Manager arrive. His name she knew was Vijay Verma. He was 28, boyishly handsome, with the litheness of an athlete. His light brown eyes and ready smile bespoke friendliness. Sadhna had dark black hair falling over her shoulders, jet black eyes, a fair complexion and a firm chin in an oval face. To Vijay, she was stunning.

On their subsequent dates, they grew very fond of each other. Within a year they were married.

Everything went off well the first year. Then the little baby boy had arrived. They named him Aditya. And then Vijay began to urge her to resign her job. He reminded her often, "Sadhna, with the addition of Aditya, your responsibilities lie in the house and not at the office. Why don't you give up your job? We don't need the money."

She had retorted, "What do you mean, my responsibility? You are equally responsible for bringing him up. I can't give up my job at this stage of my career. I never told you that I would stop working once the children came. I intend to go on. Let me tell you once and for all — don't remain under any false hope that I'll give up my job."

The argument always ended in a bitter quarrel. They loved each other deeply, but neither would make the first move for reconciliation. It was a clash of two strong personalities, two headstrong people.

Then, on that unfortunate afternoon, Sadhana had been in the office as usual when the phone rang. She picked up the receiver and heard the voice of her ayah, Krishna. She sounded hysterical and confused. "Memsaab, come quickly." "What is the matter?" she asked her. By now Krishna was crying into the phone. In between she mumbled incoherently, "Aditya, memsaab..."

Sadhna dropped the receiver down and charged into Vijay's room. He looked at her ash grey face and lips that quivered. She blurted out, "Something's happened to Aditya." He was out of his chair in a split second and dragged her along towards their car that was parked in the portico. Within fifteen minutes they were home. They both rushed into the house and found Krishna with the eight-month-old Aditya in her lap. Vijay snatched the boy from her and realized that he was dead. He put him down on the bed. Sadhna looked at him questioningly. The eerie silence was unbearable. She made an effort, "Vijay?" He did not reply, but his one glance told her all that he wanted to say. She sat on the bed and picked up Aditya and howled.

Later on they learnt that Krishna had put the feeding bottle in his month and had gone out to chat with her friend. The child had somehow choked to death.

This accident was the result of sheer negligence on the part of the ayah. Vijay didn't speak a word, but his silence spoke of the anger in him. And Sadhna knew he blamed her entirely for this tragedy. Vijay started being aloof. He hardly ever spoke to her. The gulf between them kept widening. They did sleep under the same roof, but the tension kept mounting. That unfortunate night Aditya had died, Sadhna had drawn Vijay close to her in bed wanting to console him, but he roughly pulled himself away and turned his back on her. Since then, they shared the same bed all right, but had never touched each other. They both realized that their marriage was breaking up, but neither of them took the initiative to do anything about it.

Sadhna was soon posted to Bombay on promotion as Deputy Manager. That evening, when they returned home, Vijay asked her, "When are you going?" "In ten days' time," she replied. She wanted him to tell her at least once not to go. She would have resigned her job to save the marriage, but he never said a word. She started her packing, hoping he would stop her, but he did not. Vijay also waited for one small loving gesture from her, but it never came. Both were too adamant, too egoistic to take the first step.

Vijay came to see her off at the station. Sadhna put up a brave front. Hiding her emotions she went about the whole thing in a detached manner. She went inside the train and sat there, next to the window. He stood on the platform, near the window, but neither of them spoke, each waiting for the other to set the ball rolling. The signal turned green, and Vijay said, "Sadhna ..." "You said something?" Sadhna asked eagerly, hope welling up in her heart, "No, nothing," was his brief reply. The guard blew the whistle, and the train rolled out of the station.

Sadhna reached Bombay with mixed feelings. She missed Vijay a lot even though during the previous month they had hardly exchanged a word. Though she was determined not to write to him, she always awaited the postman eagerly every day. In a remote corner of her heart, she still hoped for a letter from him asking her to come back.

Arvind was the manager of this branch. He took an immense liking to Sadhna and showed his feelings in his gestures and talk. Sadhna too liked him a lot, but she knew no one could ever take the place of Vijay in her life. Arvind loved her, but she could not return his feelings. This did not, however, discourage him and his love continued deep and sincere. Whenever he tried to peep into her past she evaded the issue and shut the doors firmly on it.

THEY LOVED EACH OTHER DEEPLY, BUT NEITHER WOULD MAKE THE FIRST MOVE FOR RECONCILIATION. IT WAS A CLASH OF TWO POWERFUL PERSONALITIES, TWO HEADSTRONG PEOPLE

On arrival in Bombay, the loneliness of her life had been unbearable. To get over it, she tried taking a drink late in the evening. She liked the warmth that spread through her body and the slow relaxation of the mind, and this gradually grew into addiction. Sadhna was busy during the day, engrossed in her work, but in the evenings when she returned home, she felt lonely and depressed. Old memories haunted her — the memory of the night when Aditya died kept coming back to her again and again. Alcohol shut off those thoughts, blanked her mind.

She wondered why, when so much had happened around her, to the people around her during these six years, her life hadn't changed a bit; it had become static. Munni came into the room and asked "Memsaab will you be home for dinner?" Sadhna returned to the present and looked at her watch. "My God, it's 9 o'clock! I'll be late for work. Munni, Arvind sahib will be coming over for dinner tonight so please make the chicken that is lying in the fridge, plus two or three other dishes." Saying this she rushed to the bathroom.

That evening, Sadhna returned home feeling nervous and anxious. Since the time she had learnt about the coming visit of Vijay she was sitting on needles. She poured herself a drink and went outside into the balcony. She pulled up a chair and watched the beautiful night, the sea waves and the big, dark rocks. She watched the waves rush with so much force only to break up against the rocks and they seemed to return with more vigour, only to be broken up again. She watched them for very long, lost in the beauty of the sea, lost in her own thoughts that too broke like the waves against the walls of her brain.

At last Arvind arrived. He was very apologetic. "I am sorry Sadhna, I am late. I had to go to receive Mr. Vijay Verma at the airport and the flight was one hour late. I've just dropped him at the hotel and came straight from there."

She felt a lump in her throat at the very mention of Vijay's name. "How ironic! Even after six years of separation I'm mad about him," she thought. To hide her emotions, she gulped down her drink and went inside to fill up her glass and to get one for him.

Arvind watched her. Her lifestyle had a touch of tragedy and the compulsive death wish of a moth flying towards a flame. He sadly watched this beautiful, lonely woman. He took her hands impulsively and said, "Sadhna, I want to marry you. I hate to see you destroying yourself gradually like this. I love you." She pulled her hands from his grasp and, looking straight into his eyes, said, "Arvind. I'm Mrs. Sadhna Verma and not Miss Sadhna Kapur as people know me here. On paper, I'm still married to him, I mean to your Mr. Vijay Verma."

He was shocked to hear this and found himself incapable of speech. Sadhna told him all that there was to be told. He now realised the reason for her perennial look of desolation, for her need of alcohol. But she was destroying herself.

Next morning, Sadhna, went to office dressed in a printed silk saree, a present from Vijay on their first wedding anniversary. The upper echelon were all seated around the conference table when he walked in. Their eyes met and held for a few seconds. They were all introduced to him by turn. Her heart throbbed wildly when she heard her name, "Miss Sadhna Kapur." She felt giddy and sat down suddenly. "Is something the matter? Why, you are not looking well at all," whispered a worried colleague. "No, I'm fine." she said.

Arvind watched the two with a sad, helpless look on his face. He still adored Sadhna and wanted to see her laugh and smile, and laugh and smile with her, but some cursed pride, an uncontrolled ego seemed to seal his lips.

The meeting was over. Everyone left, but she sat on in her chair. Outside, Vijay realized that he had left his dark glasses on the table. Someone offered to go and fetch them, but he snapped, "No thank you. I'll get them myself." He walked in and saw her sitting there in the corner. He went up to her and said, "Sadhna, how are you?" Her voice was thick with emotion as she said, "I'm fine." He want-

Continued on page 53

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THE LITTLE WOMAN

by Don Tobin

AT a particular stretch on the road, motorists would speed dangerously until one bright gent solved the problem by putting up a sign: GO SLOW. NUDIST CROSSING HERE.

• • •

TWO rustics were watching a plane going overhead. Suddenly one said, "That's a mail plain."

"Dang me," said the other, "you've got damn good eyesight."

• • •

A FATHER of six girls was delighted when his wife presented him with a boy. Asked one day by a friend, "Is your son handsome?" he replied, "I don't know. I haven't looked at his face yet."

• • •

KNOW why there are less rail accidents than road accidents?

Because you don't find the driver with his arm around the fireman.

• • •

NERVOUS suitor: "If I give you three rupees, will you tell me what your sister says about me?"

Little brother: "Make it five and I'll tell you what dad's going to do to you."

• • •

A MAN was consulting a phychiatrist. Among other questions, the doctor asked, "Are you troubled by improper thoughts?"

"Why, no," said the patient, "as a matter of fact I rather enjoy them."

• • •

PHOTOGRAPHER: "Look pleasant, Madam. As soon as I take this picture, you can assume your natural expression."

• • •

MARRIED life seemed to have worn him down, so he went to his doctor.

"There's nothing radically wrong with you," said the medico after an examination. "All you need is a little sun and air."

"I suppose you're right," said the patient, "but my wife is dead set against having any children."

• • •

WIFE: "Why can't you be like that nice Mr. Smith who has just moved in next door? Every morning before he goes to work he kisses his wife three times. Why don't you do that?"

Husband: "Good heavens! I haven't even been introduced to her."

• • •

FATHER: "There's plenty of time for Bessie to get married. Let her wait till the right man comes along."

Mother: "I don't see why she should. I didn't."

• • •

"JUDGE, I don't know what to do."

"Why?"

"Well, I swore to tell the truth, but every time I try, some lawyer interrupts."

• • •

THE boys at the roundhouse observed that one of the crew looked unusually glum. They asked him why.

"I think my wife is tired of me," said the fellow. "For a week now, she's wrapped up my lunch in a road-map."

• • •

MOTHER: "Marie, before you become serious about that young man of yours, make sure he's kind and considerate."

Marie: "Oh, I'm sure of that, Mum. Why only the other day he told me that he had put his shirt on a horse that was scratched."

Compiled by George Fegradoe

When the
dew-drenched earth
Wakes to your
silver anklets,
And the stars
are dimmed by your
Kohl-dark eyes,
When the morn is
filled with your
flower-fresh charm,
Only then, beloved,
does my sun arise.

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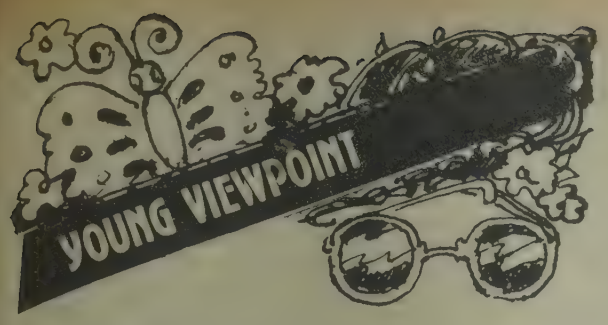


A forum for young people to express their opinions, share news about their activities and get to know more about each other

"INDIAN MUSLIMS RECEIVE STEP-MOTHERLY TREATMENT"

Says S. Shahzad Shah

To write an article on the problems which the Muslims face in India is raising a hornet's nest. The amount of heat and controversy it generates forces people to follow a cautious attitude, and hence one rarely finds a true picture of what really is the crux of the problem.

The period of 33 years, since India achieved independence, has been a period of turmoil for Indian Muslims, a period of struggle, of a nature never witnessed in its history — the struggle against communalism. Even the experience of three decades has failed to stop what still happens at Aligarh, Jamshedpur, Sambhal, Moradabad, and now even in the South. It makes one pause and think that there is really something basically wrong in the system.

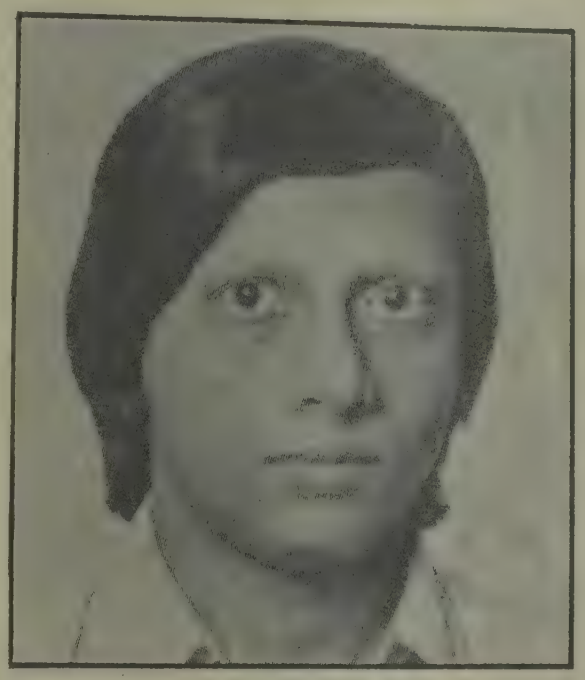
Communalism in the Indian society is like a virus; off and on it erupts suddenly like an epidemic. To get rid of it would be one of the greatest achievements in our history. This dreaded disease is very much a product of the British rule in India, where imperialist aims could be achieved and maintained only by pursuing a policy of divide and rule. Especially from the beginning of the 20th century, the Muslim section was deliberately alienated from the Hindus, and Muslim and Hindu communalism arose. Its most evident result was the division of India and the creation of Pakistan.

It was during this period that the masses, fed on baseless stories of cruelties and persecution, embalmed in their heart a secret and powerful desire for vengeance, distrust and hatred. The passage of time had, to a great deal, lessened it, but of late there is a sudden increase in communal outbursts. The Muslims are feeling more and more insecure. They are getting apprehensive of the majority community and more so of the role being played by some of the States.

The freedom with which diehard communal forces, belonging to different communities, operate in the country, only further aggravates the crisis. It has been admitted, although by a few, that the traditional docility of the Hindus no longer exists and Hindu militancy is increasing, and the plan seems to be the gradual, annihilation of Muslim religion, culture and economy. This fact of communalism has been evident to such a degree that in spite of pious promises, such important institutions as schools and such important media as text books are pressed into service for spreading communalism and intensifying the rivalry.

The banning of some history text-books of the N.C.E.R.T. is a clear example of this. Reports and evidence are there of teachers in Government schools who are constantly involved in preaching communalism in classes and calling Indian Muslims filthy, unpatriotic and even foreigners. This discrimination, though evident against all the minorities of India is more so against the Muslims, whose greatest fault has been that hundreds of years ago their ancestors happened to be the rulers of this country. This has to be stopped. The government, instead of just giving tall promises, should now wake up and take effective steps to end this state of affairs.

A major problem is the blatant accusation against the Muslims of India as unpatriotic traitors, and more to the point, "Pakistanis." It is constantly pointed out that the Muslims have not identified themselves with India. This accusation is so baseless and ridiculous that one cannot but laugh at it. Secularism does not require the smaller groups to give up their religion and culture. Secularism does not mean regimentation of ideas on the lines of the majority group.



A true secular state is one where all religious groups keep their personal religious identity, but are subject to the laws of the country and are loyal to it. And the Muslims have not given even a single hint that they do not follow this. They don't abstain from paying taxes, they don't invite or aid foreign invasions, they don't damage government property; but still they are termed unpatriotic and "Pakistani." They are termed Pakistanis because during the first two decades after the Partition, a good number of Indian Muslims migrated to Pakistan in the hope of getting jobs over there. There were job opportunities then; it is not the position today. No Indian Muslim can get a job in Pakistan today.

Anyhow, this exodus to Pakistan was in no way different from the current rush to Muslim countries in the Gulf region by all Indians, mostly non-Muslims. Indians, belonging to all communities, have migrated and settled in various parts of the world, but their relatives, staying back in India, are not being dubbed unpatriotic. No Indian would go anywhere else, if he can get opportunities for jobs in India. So is the case with Indian Muslims.

The foremost problem is, indeed, that of job opportunities, especially the government services — a sector from where expectations are generally high. Indian Muslims have a feeling that there is a deliberate policy of discrimination where merit is often ignored. In the U.P.S.C. examination, there has hardly been a single year when more than 4 per cent of Muslims were selected. Opportunities are not only denied in jobs, but even in such fields as sports; there is a clear and visible attitude of favouritism and regional and communal selection.

Now, this unnecessary controversy over Muslim personal law which has created quite some furore. The demand that Muslims should nullify their personal law and accept a uniform State law is unreasonable. An organized attack is being made on Muslim personal law with accusations that it would result in stagnation and check the development of the country, and lead to enmity between various sections of society. These accusations are entirely baseless. Let us be clear about it. A "personal law" is exclusively a personal matter of the community. When the entire Muslim population accepts without reservation its personal law, what right has the government to forcibly bring about the so-called "modernization and development" among Muslims? If any change is warranted, let the Muslims themselves bring about such a change. These are non-issues, unnecessarily being blown out of all proportion by the government which instead of placating the Muslims, is provoking them with no plausible advantage to it.

The injustice has nowhere been more intense than in respect of two very sensitive issues for the Muslims — Aligarh Muslim University and the status of Urdu. The A.M.U. for Muslims is a centre of their culture, an institution where their children can hope to get not only modern education, not merely a degree, but also, as Sir Syed Ahmed Khan wanted, a knowledge of Islamic principles and traditions. It is a minority institution established by the minority community, primarily for Muslims. Depriving the institution of its minority character is the greatest blow to the Muslim community. The A.M.U. is not a communal centre. Some of its most important faculties have predominantly non-Muslim staff and students. Within the

Continued on page 55

SHOW STEALERS!

The most startling sartorial experience brought to Bombayites was "Punky Town" — a fashion show, the first of its kind in India, sponsored by NIRLON, a major manufacturer of synthetic yarn, and staged at the grooviest nightspot of Bombay — STUDIO '29. With flashing tiny disco lights that gave a psychedelic effect, the attractive models, masked with mysterious make-ups, came alive in a frenzy of movement and eye expressions, captivating the spectators with the jazzy mod styles, very different from the usual — all made from Nirjet suiting and Nirlon nylon.

The show, which enthralled the trend setters present, was produced by SHANTI CHOPRA and choreographed by young and talented SANGEETA CHOPRA. A truly electrifying experience which everybody looks forward to seeing again.

ABOVE : A navy-blue jumpsuit with yoke and sleeves in yellow, perked-up with scanty embroidery: the other in a flouncy red top caught at the waist with an elastic. Sequined embroidery gives a touch of glitter to the evening wear.

ABOVE RIGHT : A stunning outfit — a mod harem-pant suit in rusty brown, matched with one side off-shouldered top with flimsy braid trimmings falling loose from the shoulder edge.

BELOW RIGHT : Go groovy in a duo combination of colours — a turquoise figure-hugging jumpsuit is highlighted with abstract patches of magenta. The outfit looks extra mod with one side off-shoulder, and full sleeved on the other side.

Photographs : Taiyeb Badshah

THE STORY SO FAR

Rita Roy, a 12-year-old orphan arrives at Kanchrapara, near Calcutta, to spend the last fortnight of her summer holidays with her Uncle Sunil, Aunt Sheela, and cousins Babloo (10) and Bapi (8), who live in a picturesque area of the Railway Colony in a red brick house called Gul Mohar.

In the course of her stay, Rita discovers a series of strange goings-on in the house. A missing doll from her dead grandmother, Didima's clay collection upsets Aunt Sheela no end and while Rita searches for it secretly, is startled by a "ghost" sporting a white sheet and red sandals.

The surprises give way to shocks. Rita becomes the victim of a number of "accidents" and is convinced of a threat to her life. One night she finds a note under her pillow warning her to "tell all or else". She also overhears a conversation between her uncle and aunt which indicates that she had been invited to Gul Mohar for a definite purpose. Puzzled and frightened Rita decides to confide in the cook Lakshman who cautions her to be careful and slips a piece of paper in her hand which says, "Boorie must see you soon".

Then on a dark stormy night, Boorie hands over the missing doll to Rita, which Didima had entrusted in her care. As Rita creeps back into her room, Aunt Sheela pounces on her angrily, snatches the doll away and returns it to the shelf in Didima's room.

NOW READ ON . . .

Quite desperate, Rita slipped off the bed. Taking her torch, she felt her way in the dark to the kitchen. Only when well inside Didima's room, did she dare to switch it on. In relief, she noticed the doll occupying the vacant space in the showcase.

She slipped back the glass panels and took it out. Like the others, the Manipuri dancer was made of clay, colourfully dressed, with a billowing skirt. On scrutiny, it appeared no different from the other dolls. Rita turned it upside down, shook it; but there seemed nothing special about it.

Yet, there must be. Or else, why would Didima have made such a point about the doll being given to her?

And then, as she ran her eyes along the edge of the skirt, Rita noticed the difference. Added to the gay pattern on the skirt, was a neat border of embroidery — clusters of flowers, which did not seem a part of the original costume pattern.

Feeling she was on the track of something, in growing excitement, Rita stared hard at the embroidery in the torchlight and gradually she discerned a series of letters in the pattern of flowers. She was spelling out words next. After which, she was able to read the sentence:

"BLACK OUTSIDE IT IS TRUE, BUT VALUE INSIDE FOR YOU."

Didima's message! That was it! Didima had worked the embroidery herself. She had discovered the key to the mystery, Rita realised.

But what did it mean? She was puzzled, thinking hard, barely hearing the click in the lock at the front door, till it swung open.

She tried to hide.

Too late!

The ceiling light came on, and for the second time that night, she was face to face with a furious Aunt Sheela.

"Just as I thought! I knew you would get in through that kitchen door," Aunt Sheela snapped. "That is why I replaced the doll. You thought I would be asleep, but I've lain in wait for you. Give it to me."

She snatched the doll away and fell to examining it, twisting it around, shaking it violently again, and over again. Rita's heart was in her mouth. What if Aunt Sheela should read Didima's message? That was exactly what Didima had not wished.

However, in this respect, it was quite safe. Rita did not know that without her reading glasses, her aunt could not see clearly. She did not even so much as notice the embroidery, let alone read the message.

PART SIX

the mystery at gul mohar

A Novel For Children

Vernon Thomas

Then, when she had finished shaking the doll to no avail, Aunt Sheela finally dashed it to the floor, where it lay in pieces. She bent to examine the pieces. One would think she expected to find pieces of gold had scattered.

Rita did not get a chance to ponder on her aunt's curious behaviour, as now, finding nothing, Aunt Sheela had turned her attention on Rita again. With a look that spelt murder, she proceeded to advance on Rita.

Rita backed away in terror, dodging between the furniture. As she reached the bedside table, she clung to Blackie for protection.

Then, with only Blackie between them, Aunt Sheela pulled up short. She appeared to be controlling herself with an effort. When she spoke, her voice was choked with anger.

"In the morning you will leave! By the earliest possible train. You have caused enough trouble. I don't ever want to see you again.

"And take that cat with you," she added, pointing her finger at Blackie. "Like you, it was always troublesome. I'll be happy to see you both go. Now get to bed at once!"

She stood watching, with arms folded as Rita, clutching Blackie, slipped past her — out by the front door, and to bed.

Back again at the orphanage, it all seemed so unreal. Kanchrapara and its happenings were like a bad dream. Except that Blackie was there — to assure her that it **had** taken place.

Seated on her bed, the afternoon sunlight streaming into the silent dormitory, Rita listened to the voices of the other girls at play in the grounds below. The school was fairly deserted; the holidays were still not over; her companions were girls who, like herself, had no homes to go to.

She was happy to be back. Her only regret was, that she had not been able to solve the mystery. Rita still could not understand Didima's message. And it had been sad to leave Lakshman and Boorie behind. Not to forget Bapi, of whom she had grown quite fond.

But Blackie was able to make up for it all. Rita loved him dearly now. Blackie gave her a feelling of being close to Didima.

She picked up the stuffed cat, squatting on the bed beside her, and kissed it impulsively. She stroked the glossy fur, felt she could almost hear Blackie purr in reply. Idly she turned Blackie over and started to examine it. She ran her finger lightly along the middle where the taxidermist had stitched him.

Rita discovered a spot where the stitching had come undone. She parted Blackie's fur, and inquisitively shoved her finger into the opening. As she had thought, there was straw inside.

But there was something else!

A piece of paper?

No, it felt like an envelope. She widened the gap a bit and drew it out.

It was an envelope — a plain white one, sealed. There was something inside.

Wondering, Rita slit the envelope open. Inside, she found a pad of cotton wool, and tucked away in its layers were a collection of tiny red beads in different sizes. She poured them into her palm and held them up to the sunlight. And, as they sparkled Rita realised what they were.

Rubies! Red rubies! Didima's collection of uncut stones, bought for her by Dadu on a visit to Rangoon many years back! They were terribly expensive, Didima had told her once. Rita had always thought that Didima had sold her rubies at the time when Dadu died and she had gone to live with Aunt Sheela.

However, here they were! And the mystery was solved. The rubies explained everything.

They were the reason why she had been invited to Kanchrapara, Rita now knew. Evidently, Aunt Sheela thought Didima must have told her where they had been hidden.

And there was more!

No wonder, Aunt Sheela had asked Didima to live with her when Dadu died! No wonder Aunt Sheela had smashed the doll! She must have thought the rubies were inside.

And Didima' embroidered message! It was clear now: Black outside was Blackie of course; value inside were the rubies.

And they were hers — left to her by Didima. Rita was overjoyed. How she wished she could tell someone!

But, of course, she would not. That was not what Didima had intended. Didima had been so secretive about the whole thing — not even trusting a bank. The rubies were not meant for her now, Rita knew. They would be of use to her when she was grown up.

Till then, therefore, they must remain with Blackie. Blackie would guard them till required.

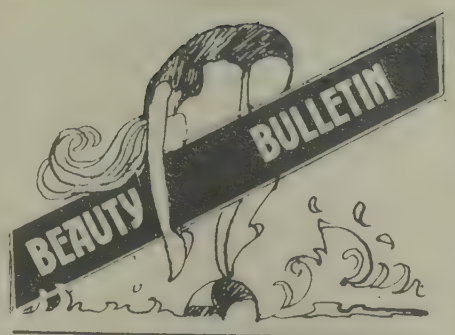
Rita replaced the envelope carefully and, getting out her little workbox, searched for the toughest needle she owned. Neatly she began to stitch up the opening.

Poor Aunt Sheela. she thought as she stitched. She almost felt sorry for her. In her anger and hatred Aunt Sheela had readily parted with the very thing which held the secret she had been trying so hard to uncover. And the punishment for her greed would be years of uncertainty, years of searching, no doubt.

Rita completed her task as the bell rang for tea. At which, she got off the bed, returned Blackie to her locker with a huge kiss. Then, humming gaily to herself, she skipped away down the corridor, towards the dining hall.

Concluded

"The Mystery At Gul Mohar" by Vernon Thomas, which was released this month, has been published by Ms. Better Yourself Books, 28 B. Chathan Lines, Allahabad-211 002. Price: Rs. 4.50.



Kiyoko M., a leading beautician, will answer your beauty queries every fortnight in this column.

TRY THESE TIPS

I am 30 and have fine wrinkles on my neck. I am very conscious about this as this gives me an aged appearance. Please suggest some exercise to remove them.

I have another problem. My hands are very dry because I wash them often. Any remedy?

K.H.H. (Chandigarh)

The neck area is often neglected, you should pay as much attention to your neck as to your face. Massaging with a nourishing cream, in upward movements, will help minimise the wrinkles.

Here are exercises to firm muscles of the neck.

WRINKLES ON NECK

Sit at a table. Place your elbow on the table and make a fist under chin. Push down on fist with chin, at the same time, try to lift head upwards with the fist. Do not lift the elbow. Relax. Repeat this exercise.

You could try this one too: Throw your head back, push chin and lower lip forward. Try touching the tip of your nose with the tip of your tongue. You might find this difficult but the effort counts.

Every time you wash your hands, dry them thoroughly. Then lavish plenty of cream on both hands. Keep a bottle near the kitchen sink/in the bathroom for ready use.

Also give your hands warm oil treatment every two-three days to combat dryness. Soak your hands in olive oil about ten minutes. This will benefit your nails too.

CARE FOR PERMED HAIR

I have recently had my hair permed. How should I look after it so that the perm lasts longer? Also I have vertical ridges on my nails, any remedy?

D.S. (Bombay)

Shampoo your hair with a mild shampoo which is rich in proteins. Since the perm tends to dry hair, condition your hair. But don't do this too often as this will soften your perm. And when brushing hair, do it very gently.

Vertical ridges are usually hereditary but you could try dipping your nails in olive oil for 10 minutes daily to strengthen them. Also take gelatine in water or fruit juice every day. Have a balanced diet including foods rich in vitamin A, fruits, milk and honey.

If the condition persists, consult a doctor.

HAIRLINE PROBLEM

I have a problem with my hairline. My face is surrounded with short, wispy pieces of hair that stick out. They never stay flat. What should I do?

My skin is very dry, Please suggest me a home made face pack.

J.K. (Delhi)

Try this trick for your hair problem. Moisten a little cotton-wool with a hairspray and smooth the wispy hair into place.

You should take regular care of your skin and replace both moisture and oils. At night massage a nourishing cream on your face and neck.

Here is a face pack for you. To a dessertspoon of honey add a little almond oil and one egg white. Beat well till stiff. Spread this evenly on your face and leave it on till it dries. Rinse well. Store the remainder in your refrigerator.

A quality product from Government Soap Factory, Bangalore Marketed by Mysore Sales International Ltd., Bangalore-560 052

MCA MSS 61

RICE-A-ROUND THE WORLD!

Premila Lal

If you are interested in the food of other countries and love cooking, then we have something nice to offer you this week. We take you on a gastronomical tour of the world and introduce to you some of the well-favoured rice dishes which can be easily prepared by housewives here. Efforts have been made to cut out the expensive wines and liquors which are normally called for in these recipes. We have also tried to incorporate ingredients that are locally available

CARIBBEAN SAFFRON RICE

1 chicken, cut into pieces
4 tbsps. oil
2 tomatoes, chopped
¼ tsp. pepper
Salt to taste
30 grams butter
Juices of 2 lemons
A dash tabasco sauce
Breadcrumbs
1 tin pineapple slices, cubed
1 orange, sliced thinly

FOR THE SAFFRON RICE:

3 tbsps. oil
4 cups rice
A pinch saffron
Salt to taste
1 onion, chopped
1 pint chicken stock

Saute the onions until light brown. Add the washed and drained rice, saffron and salt. Stir. Add the stock and cook till the rice is done.

Marinate the chicken pieces in salt and lime juice for an hour. Heat the oil Fry the chicken pieces till brown. Add sauce, tomatoes and check seasoning. Stir. Cover

RICE CAN BE MADE INTO MANY AN INTERESTING DISH WITH SOME IMAGINATION AND ENTERPRISE AS THE RECIPES HERE SHOW

Photograph : Taiyab Badsha.

and cook for fifteen to twenty minutes over low heat.

Melt the butter. Roll the pineapple cubes in breadcrumbs and lightly fry them in butter. Arrange the rice in a platter. Spread well. Pile the chicken onto the rice and pour over the sauce. Top with pineapple cubes and garnish with orange slices.

PHILLIPINO RICE PUDDING

1 cup rice
2 cups thick coconut milk
½-¾ cup brown sugar
A pinch salt
¼ tsp. vanilla

Wash the rice well and leave to soak in water for half an hour. Drain well and place to cook with the coconut milk, sugar and salt. Cook till rice is soft. Flavour with vanilla. Serve hot.

MEXICAN RICE WITH CHICKEN LIVERS

8-10 chicken livers
1½ cups rice
1 cup tomato sauce
4 cups chicken broth
¼ cup cooking oil
1½ tbsp. butter
2 onions, minced
2 tbsps. hot prepared mustard
2 tbsps. parsley, finely chopped
Salt and pepper to taste

Heat the butter and saute the chicken livers with a dash of salt and pepper till tender. Chop the livers and keep warm. In a heavy pan heat the oil and add onion. When just translucent add the rice and saute, stirring constantly till light brown. Mix the broth, tomato sauce and mustard and add slowly to the rice along with the parsley. Season to taste. Simmer covered until the liquid evaporates. Add the liver pieces and mix. Cover and cook gently till the liquid is absorbed and the rice is tender. If the rice has not cooked through, sprinkle with a little water or broth and cook till done. Instead of the chicken livers, prawns can be substituted.

MILANESE RISO CON SCAMPI

250 grams rice
350 grams scampi (prawn substitute)
3 tbsps. butter
3 tbsps. oil
1 tbsp. tomato puree
1 tbsp. brandy (optional)
1 bay leaf
2 tbsps. flour
½ cup milk
½ cup thin cream
Salt and pepper
3 tbsps. cheese, grated

Cook the rice separately in boiling water till done. Wash and dry the mushrooms. Heat one tablespoon oil and one tablespoon of butter in a pan and add bay leaf and prawns. Stir for a couple of minutes and add the brandy. Stir again and put in the tomato puree. Cook for another minute. Gradually stir in the milk and cream and season to taste. Cover and simmer on a gentle fire for ten minutes. In another pan heat a tablespoon butter with the remaining oil and saute the mushroom gently for five minutes, sprinkle a little salt. Add the cooked rice, cheese and the remaining butter. Pack the mixture in an oiled ring mould. Turn out on a platter and pile the prawn mixture in the centre and around. Serve immediately.

ITALIAN GREEN RICE (Risotto Verde)

350 grams rice
250 grams spinach
1 tbsp. fresh parsley, chopped (coriander substitute)
60 grams butter
2 tbsps. olive oil (substitute peanut)
125 grams onions, finely chopped
1 tbsp. celery, finely chopped
5 cups hot chicken stock
Cheese, grated
Salt and pepper to taste

Chop the spinach finely and wash the rice. In a saucepan heat the oil and half the amount of butter. Put in the onion and celery and cook over low heat for five minutes. Add the spinach and parsley. Stir. Cover and cook for another five minutes stirring occasionally. Stir in the rice and fry till translucent. Add stock and cook till done, not too soft. Mix in the remaining butter, season with salt and pepper and stir in a tablespoon of grated cheese. Serve with a generous helping of grated cheese.

PERSIAN RICE

1 small chicken
250 grams seedless grapes
½ kg rice
1 large onion, sliced
2 pieces cinnamon
4 cloves
6 cardamoms
1 tsp. cummin seeds
1 inch piece ginger
Oil
Salt to taste

Joint the chicken. Boil in enough water, with addition of salt and all the dry spices. Remove when tender. Strain out the chicken pieces and preserve the stock. Slice the onion and ginger and fry in a little oil. Drain. In the same oil fry the chicken pieces. Remove chicken from the oil and fry the cummin seed and rice in the same oil till light brown. Put back the chicken pieces, grapes and the reserved stock. Cook till rice is done. Serve sprinkled with the fried onion and ginger.

CARIBBEAN RICE WITH MUSSELS

375 grams rice
500 grams fresh mussels
1 coconut
2 onions
6 cloves garlic, flaked
4 dry red chillis
12 peppercorns
2 sticks cinnamon
Oil
Salt to taste

Wash and clean the mussels and carefully remove meat from the shells. Grate half the coconut, fry in oil and grind. Keep aside. Similarly fry the peppercorns and cinnamon and coriander seeds. Grind them. Chop onions and garlic. Heat the oil and fry onions and garlic till brown. Add the fried and ground masalas, red chillis and the cleaned rice. Extract milk from half of the coconut and add to the rice with enough water to cook. Add salt.

In a frying pan, fry the mussels in a little oil, season with salt and chilli powder and keep aside. When the rice is almost done, add the mussels and grated coconut. Mix well and place in an oven for fifteen to twenty minutes. Serve with tomato chutney.

FRIED RICE

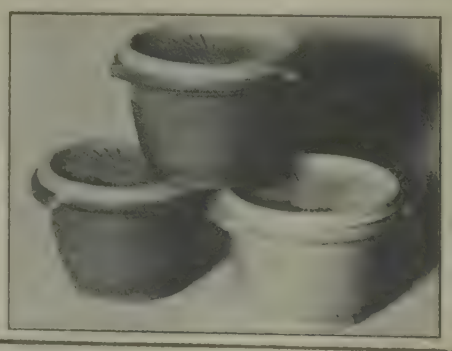
2 cups cooked rice (cold)
2 tbsps. soya sauce
1 bunch spring onion with tops, sliced
3 bacon slices, cooked crisp, crumbled
3-4 eggs, beaten
Pepper to taste
2 tbsps. oil

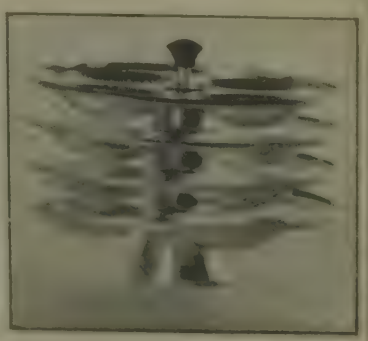
Heat the oil in a heavy kerahi and saute the rice for about five minutes till golden brown. Stir in the beaten eggs till cooked about three minutes. Stir in the bacon and soya sauce and season with pepper. Mix in the onions. Stir and cook a minute before serving.

ANNOUNCING NEW GIFTS FOR OUR COOKERY WINNERS

Prize winners of our Weekly Contest will receive in addition to the usual Rs. 50.00 cash prize:

1) A set of 3 Thumb-Press Storefresh container from TRUPTI INDUSTRIES, 2) A gift hamper from WEIKFIELD containing Elaichi Custard Powder, Jelly Crystals, Drinking Chocolate, Glucose-D, Variety Custard Powder and Corn Flour and, 3) a 4 plate Meera Steam-Thru from MEERA METAL INDUSTRIES, Bombay.





Mrs. Priscilla Pereira, Bassein.

TOASTED COCONUT LOGS

4, ½ inch thick slices bread
1 tin condensed milk
1 coconut, scraped

Remove the crusts from the bread slices and cut each slice into fourths to make half inch logs. Soak each log in condensed milk, drain on wax paper then roll in coconut. Place on a lightly greased cookie sheet and bake in a moderate oven for about fifteen minutes till the coconut is well roasted.

Mrs. Aruna Joshi, Bombay.

PATHRADO

20 small colocasia leaves
200 grams rice
100 grams tur dal
A pinch asafoetida
15 red chillis
½ coconut, grated
A lime-sized ball tamarind
A small ball jaggery
Salt to taste

Soak the rice and dal together for a minimum of four hours. Roast the red chillis in a teaspoon of oil. Grind the grated coconut, red chillis and tamarind together with very little water to a coarse paste. Add the washed rice and dal and continue grinding to a fine paste. Add asafoetida, salt and jaggery and mix well. Wash the colocasia leaves and remove the midribs. Apply paste on the reverse side of one leaf. Place another leaf on top and apply paste on this. Continue till half the leaves are used. Fold over the edges and roll into tight rolls. Make more rolls with the remaining leaves and paste.

Steam the rolls, till a skewer poked in one of them comes out clean. Cool and serve sliced garnished with coconut oil

Mrs. Raji Moorthy, Nagpur.

RAW BANANA SKIN THORAN

Skin of 3 raw bananas
½ tsp. turmeric powder
½ coconut
3 green chillis
½ tsp. cummin
½ tsp. mustard
1 tsp. udad dal
50 grams oil
Salt to taste

Cut the banana skins into small pieces. Soak them in salt water or pour two tablespoon butter milk in three cups of water and soak the banana skin pieces. After five minutes remove and wash. Cook the skins in two cups of water, turmeric and salt to taste. Bring to boil till soft. Remove and drain. Mix in the green chillis, cummin and the coarsely ground coconut. Heat the oil. Splutter the mustard seeds. Put in udad dal. When light red, put the banana skins and coconut mixture. Mix well. Cover and cook over a low flame for ten minutes.

IQBAL SINGH, New Delhi.

Mrs. Singh wins Rs. 50/- for this week's best recipe plus a set of 3 thumb-press Store-fresh containers from Trupti Industries, a gift hamper from Weikfield and a 4-plate Steam-Thru from Meera Metal Industries, Bombay.

MILK-PANEER CAKE

¾ cup semolina
½ cup cream
1 cup sugar, ground
1 tsp. baking powder
A pinch soda-bicarbonate
1¼ cup cottage cheese
1 cup condensed milk (unsweeten)
½ cup cashewnuts, grated

Add the baking powder and soda-bicarb to the semolina and keep aside.

Put the sugar and cream in a pan and beat until the mixture becomes light and fluffy.

Add the crumbled cottage cheese and beat for another two to three minutes. Add the condensed milk and beat again thoroughly. Add milk if required.

Lastly add the semolina and cashewnuts. Mix well and beat for a very short while.

Grease a six inch square baking tin and put the mixture in it. Bake in a preheated oven, till a needle when pierced inside comes out clean.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Monthly Cookery Queen Contest

All cookery contestants for the Monthly cookery contest have to send in their recipes, non-vegetarian or vegetarian according to the subjects specified for each month. Out of the seven best selected entries, one Monthly Queen and one Weekly Winner will be selected. The remaining five recipes will be published along with the winning recipes. We give below subjects for the coming three months to enable you to send in your entries well in advance.

April, 1981
COOKING WITH DRY BEANS
May, 1981
PICKLES
June, 1981
MARINATE AND COOK

All entries for April should reach us latest by March 5 May entries by April 5 and June entries by May 5, 1981.

COOKERY CONTESTANTS!

Revised Contest Rules

1. Each recipe must be accompanied by this coupon.
2. The author of each selected entry will be informed in advance and requested to send a passport size photograph of herself to be published along with her recipe.
3. The recipe must be original and not copied from a cookery book, a magazine of any other published material The prize-winner shall have to sign a declaration to that effect before the announcement is made and the prize awarded.

Address your entries to the Cookery Editor, EVE'S WEEKLY, Bombay Samachar Marg, Bombay—400 023.

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FOSTERING COMMUNAL HARMONY

Some time back during the student unrest at Amritsar a group of unruly youths blocked a bus and threatened to set it on fire. A woman teacher who happened to be there chided the students for wanting to destroy national property. Seeing that they were adamant, she boarded the bus and announced that if the students burnt the bus they would do so with her inside it. Realising that the lady was quite serious, the students quietly dispersed and the bus set out on its journey.

It has been generally observed that women are able to exercise a moderating influence on men in a crisis like this. In a similar situation at some places in U.P. it was again the initiative taken by some women which averted a clash between two groups of people belonging to two different communities.

Women, if they so desire, can make men listen to reason and righteousness. In fact, no woman, in whatever relation she happens to be to a man, is without some influence over the man. Napoleon once remarked, "Give me good mothers and I will give you a good nation."

India, being a land of people belonging to diverse religions and castes, is prone to communal disturbances. The recent riots in Moradabad and some other parts of India, pose a grave threat to our national unity and security and must be countered effectively by all possible means, and women can play a very important role in this.

In any bloodshed women suffer the most. Even if they are not themselves raped, or killed, every male who becomes a victim of communal frenzy is related to some women in one way or another — her father, son, husband or brother. For a mother, it is her son who dies, and not a Hindu, Muslim, or Sikh. So they have a stake in preventing or stopping communal riots.

Women can contribute to this national cause through long-term and short-term measures. And the lead in this regard has to be given by educated women and those belonging to the elite class. The first and foremost duty of our women is to inculcate a strong sense of secularism in their children's character during the most impressionable years, and they can inculcate in the young mind secularism as a way of life. That no religion preaches hatred or disregard for other religions is the basic teaching that should be imparted to our children. And the best place for such teaching is the home, and the ideal teacher, none but the mother. A mother can mould the child's mind and make his outlook truly secular.

Though by no means an easy task, educated women of our country will have to provide the lead in this regard. There is no dearth of voluntary organisations in our country which are working for the uplift of women. Such organisations are mostly being run by enlightened women with a broad and liberal outlook. Maintenance of communal harmony and national integration should form an important part of their activities. At their periodical meetings, special stress should be laid on efforts to eliminate caste and communal prejudices. It must be brought home to our less educated women that all religions and castes are equal in the eyes of God. If our women take upon themselves the responsibility of spreading the message of secularism through voluntary organisations, our children will grow up into good citizens and live a life free from communal bias.

Since, in a majority of cases, mothers are more involved in bringing up children, they have an important role to play in inculcating secular ideas and thus contributing to communal harmony

Secondly, educated women should establish women's councils and clubs both in cities as well as in villages. Once in a month or fortnight these bodies should hold their general meetings in different localities, at which they should, inter alia, deliver lectures on themes of communal harmony and national integration. Quoting from the sacred scriptures of different religions, the audience can be made to realise that all religions stress equality of human beings and respect for all religions. Learned scholars from all walks of life and all religions should be requested to address such gatherings.

Thirdly, women volunteers should periodically visit different localities in their areas to spread the message of national solidarity. The village level women workers should make it a part of their schedule to touch upon subjects of communal harmony in a subtle way during the course of their discussions with the rural women.

While the objective of the long-term remedies is to induce society as a whole to make secularism a way of life, the need to evolve short-term or emergency measures to curb communal violence calls for immediate attention by our women leaders at all levels. As soon as some communal trouble is reported in the press or over the radio and TV, women volunteers belonging to all religions should lose no time in visiting the affected areas. Their arrival on the scene is bound to have a pacifying impact on men gone mad with communal hatred. Appeals made by them for restoration of peace are sure to get a positive response immediately.

The people in the clashing crowds cannot fail to recognise respected women of their own localities. Such an initiative no doubt requires tremendous courage, but then courage is the need for women if they are to play a useful role in national affairs. Simultaneously, they should also approach the religious leaders of the locality and urge them to appeal for peace.

It is a well known fact of history that the internecine wars among the Greek city states were halted as soon as the Athenian women sent a woman plenipotentiary to their counterparts in Sparta. There is no reason why similar initiatives taken by the Indian women should not prove effective.

Gurmeet Atwal

THE DESPERATE ONES

Continued from page 19

disaster—both drastic punishment by the husband and social obloquy. And the Catholic church and rigid social custom frown on divorce. So suicide seems to be the only escape route for such women.

Chronic physical illness was the second major cause for suicide during the period between 1977-79. The women were 18 to 30 years of age, which in normal circumstances should be the best years of one's life. But the knowledge that they are a burden to the family, intolerable pain, as in cases of cancer, the emotional shallows that a prolonged illness engenders, contribute to the decision to take one's life.

Most Goan families cannot afford specialist care for their sick, and lack nursing skill. The pressure on hospital facilities and lack of beds make hospitalisation difficult. So the ailing person seeks relief in death. Other minor reasons for self-destruction are property disputes, failure in examinations and loss of social status.

Any attempt to prevent female suicide in Goa should take into account the disintegration of the socio-cultural pattern in a society that is being rapidly urbanised and industrialised, and seek to counteract its impact. The four big towns — Panaji, Vasco, Margao and Mapuca attract rural girls, in search of well-paid jobs, from their native environment. Their sudden change into a less personal and more sophisticated society is psychologically dangerous. Hence the plea by sociologists for village-based industries which will help maintain family and ethnic ties.

Education to counter the shame and fear of social stigma, which make families refuse to get psychiatric help for the mentally ill and to hide the deranged in dark rooms, is necessary. Also the extension of family and marital counselling centres and life preparation services for teenagers. The more immediate need is for community social workers who will locate cases of mental disturbance, grave illness or domestic conflict and refer these to the appropriate agency.

Women are the givers of life in more senses than one, and they are emotionally more vulnerable. It is therefore essential that they should be protected from traumas which can compel them to take their own lives.

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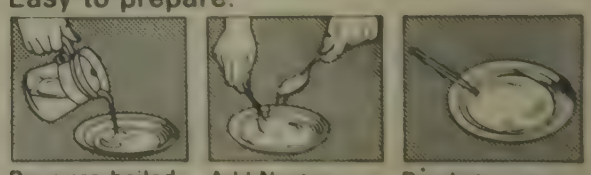

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THE LAW:

The law affects our lives much more than we tend to think. It pays to be aware of our existing rights, as well as the rights we have to fight for

DOWRY:
THE CRIME WITH SOCIAL SANCTION

Rita Rahimtoola

The two crimes against women which have roused social consciousness are dowry and rape. Both contribute to making life for women "poor, nasty, brutish and short." They combine elements of physical and mental torture which often culminate in death — either suicide or murder.

Dr. Ashok Mitra said, "Indian society treats its women as expendable assets." His statement is not an exaggeration.

Shocked by the outrage on human dignity and the reckless taking of human life, thinking people wish to know what the law is doing in the matter. They ask, what is the law of our country in respect of these crimes? Can our laws **punish** the offender? Do they, in effect, punish the offender? Further, can the law **prevent** such crimes? Has the law in reality prevented such crimes? If the guilty go unpunished and these crimes keep occurring, where does the fault lie? Is it that our laws are not correctly framed or is it that they are not properly implemented?

SOOTHING OUR SOCIAL CONSCIENCE

The framing of the laws is the task of the legislators (Parliament), the implementation of the laws is the task of the executive (Government) which, through the police force, brings individual offenders to be tried in courts by judges (judiciary). This triumvirate (legislature, executive and judiciary) comprises the State as distinct from the people.

When dowry deaths keep occurring, we blame the State for failing to punish criminals and prevent crime. We say that there is something wrong with our laws, there is something wrong with our police and there is something wrong with the victims — otherwise they would not have been victimised!

To soothe our social consciences we adopt these conclusions of convenience. We cry out that our laws are inadequate, our police is corrupt and our judges are only concerned with legal hair-splitting. As for the victims, we voice our suspicions that the raped woman had invited male attention and the charred daughter-in-law had got herself a husband by false promises of a large dowry that did not materialise.

In short, we place the blame everywhere, except where it rests the most — with us, ourselves, the people.

Ancient China maintained its civilisation for centuries despite the collapse of governments and anarchy because the people governed themselves, believing it to be their duty to observe a moral order based on humanism as taught by Confucius. They believed it was their duty to see that their neighbours followed it also.

The offences of rape and extortionate dowry are acts of people who fail to observe a moral order. Leaving aside rape, which may be considered as an individual aberration in some cases at least, dowry definitely is an offence which can flourish only in a social milieu which accepts it. Dowry requires a giver and taker. It is only when there are a large number of givers and a large number of takers that a market develops. And this market continues to exist because it has social sanction.

Our legislators made a valiant attempt to remove a widely and willingly practised social custom by enacting the Dowry Prohibition Act in 1961.

GIFTS OF AFFECTION

This Act does not prohibit the giving of **stridhana** which is rooted deep in our culture; it only prohibits the giving of dowry. What is the difference between **stridhana** and dowry? Further, the Act has introduced one more category called "gifts of affection." What does this term mean? How is it different from dowry?

In traditional Hindu society, a family comprised several generations staying together, worshipping together, eating together and owning property in common. This was known as the joint Hindu family. All the property of the family vested in its male members. The females were not owners of the property, but as members of the family (whether by birth or marriage), they were entitled to be maintained and to have their marriage expenses paid out of the family funds. Until the Hindu Women's Right to Property Act was passed in 1937, a Hindu woman could not own any property except her **stridhana.** Her **stridhana** was the only property which she could sell, transfer, gift or dispute about in any way she liked.

Stridhana means literally woman's property. It mitigated the harshness of the law which vested joint family property only in the males, by permitting women to have absolute control over some property, this property being the **stridhana.** The various sacred texts and the major schools of Hindu law are not unanimous as to what property is **stridhana** and what is not. Generally speaking, gifts given to a woman by her parents, uncles, brothers and others at the time of her marriage are her **stridhana.**

According to the Dowry Prohibition Act, dowry is not **stridhana.** Dowry is what is given as a **reason, inducement, or consideration for the marriage.** The giving or taking of dowry or abetting the giving or taking of dowry or making a demand for dowry are all prohibited. They are offences under the Act. "Gifts of affection" are not dowry. There is no ceiling on gifts of affection, even if made by the parents of the bride to the groom or to his parents.

THE MOTIVE FOR MARRIAGE

What the law in effect says is that the parents of the girl may load the couple with costly gifts but these should not be the **reason or inducement or consideration for the marriage.** In other words, the reason for the marriage should not be the obtaining of wealth. Now who can distinguish between the real reason for an act and the ostensible one? Who can say definitively what was the motive for the marriage?

Does a scooter or a fridge or a flat given by the parents of the bride as a "gift of affection" wear a different look from a similar object given as dowry? How can an observer distinguish between a "gift of affection" and dowry? The difference lies in the hidden motivations and intentions of the parties. These can only be uncovered by the law if one of the parties to the transaction becomes aggrieved and goes to the court.

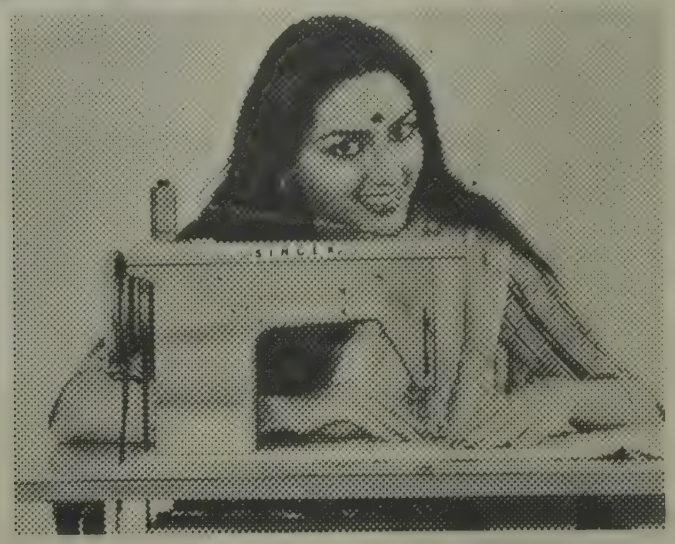
As both the giver and the taker of dowry and persons abetting the giving and taking of dowry are punishable with imprisonment up to six months or with a fine up to rupees five thousand or both, who will go to the court to complain? (All offences under this Act are non-cognizable. This means that the State will not take the initiative to prosecute the offender. Initiation of the proceeding has to be done by a private party.)

No onder then, that despite the widespread nature of this evil practice which every one deplores, hardly any cases come to court.

Since we want more offenders to be prosecuted, why has the giving and taking of dowry not been made a cognizable offence? Our legislators did not make the giving and taking of dowry and

Continued on page 44

From 1906 to 1960, 2 million people became proud owners of Singer.*.



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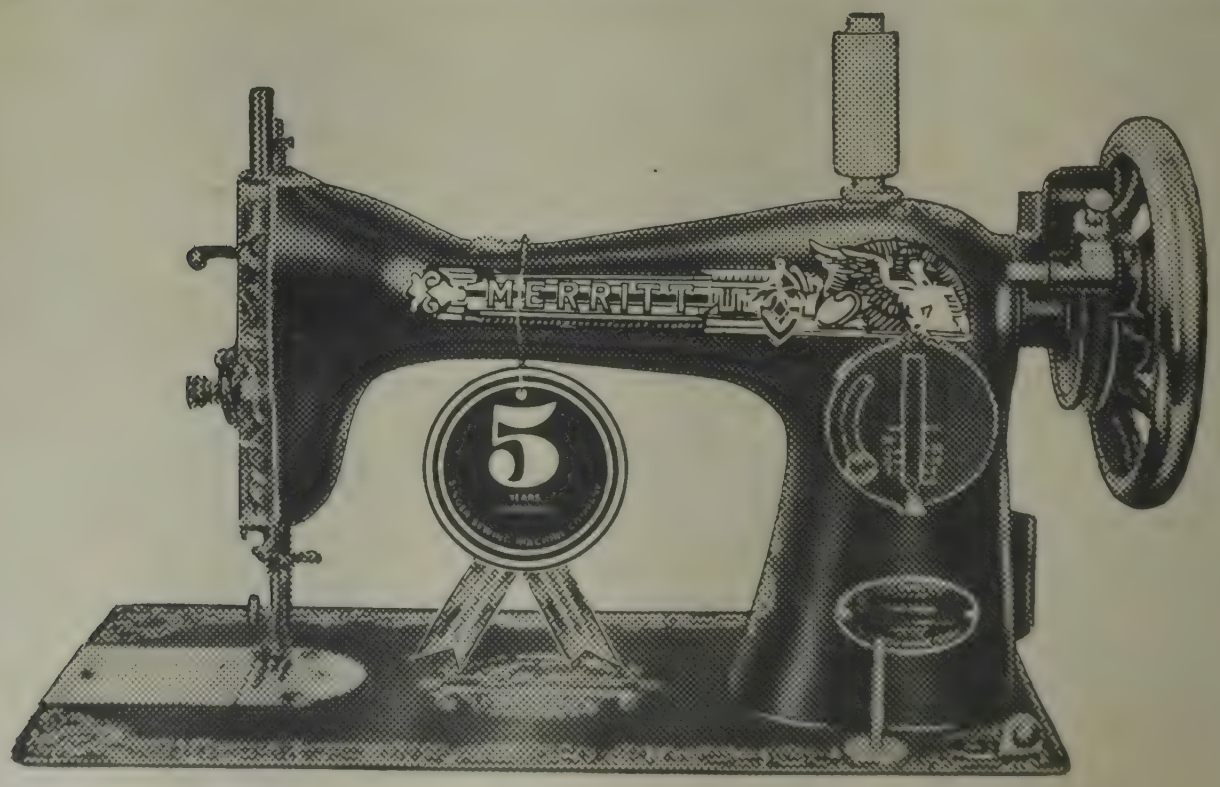

*A Trademark of THE SINGER COMPANY.

CHAITRA-SM-422

When Hema Malini married Dharmendra last year, the secret wedding sparked off several reactions. Colleagues who were in the same situation as Hema (being involved with married men is quite common in the film industry) envied her and said that Dharmendra had behaved like a real man. There were others who thought that the wedding was a black spot on the film industry. Those outside the industry reacted indignantly and talked of the bigamous affair in holier-than-thou tones.

Nobody really understood that Hema's wedding was the desperate act of a woman caught in a dilemma common to many successful working girls. It is not as if Hema started her life in films with the intention of marrying a married man. She did make an attempt to get herself an unattached man because all Hema has been interested in is marriage. Sanjeev Kumar and Jeetendra were single and eligible — as glamorous, successful and rich as she herself was. But things didn't work out with them and she found the man she needed in Dharam, and he was willing. Again, it was not as if she didn't try to keep away from a married man. She did, and so did her family. The only problem was there was nobody else around. Hema has always been too aware of her fame and success to even consider a man lower than her in riches or fame. Her mother paraded a lot of eligibles in front of her — a doctor settled abroad, etc. They were eligible for a normal middle class girl but not for Hema any more.

In Tamil there is a term for a husband who follows his wife around, with no personality and no name of his own. The term is **kooja tooki** which literally means a man who carries a jug. In Madras, it is applied to husbands who have nothing better to do than run behind their wives. No girl really wants a **kooja tooki** for a husband, and Hema, like other very successful girls, didn't come across any bachelor who could match her success and fame.

Nanda, who has remained a bachelor girl, once said, "I feel that in India the woman is still two steps behind her man. Where can I find a man who won't suffer from a complex that his wife is more successful and better known than him? Men do tend to develop an inferiority complex when they step out and find the woman getting all the attention."

Added to this was the question of the man's bank balance. There aren't very many unattached men around who can match a film star's bank balance. "And why should I shift out of this bungalow of mine to live in a flat with a man who can't afford something better for me?" continued Nanda. The only ideal couple in Nanda's eyes was Sharmila and Pataudi. "Even at the height of her popularity Pataudi was never lost in her shadow. I remember a big crowd had once collected outside a building where Sharmila and Pataudi were visiting somebody. The crowds were more anxious to meet Pataudi than Sharmila and, mind you, this was at a time when she was really popular in her own right."

Nanda's dilemma is the same as Asha Parekh's today. Asha, like Nanda, is not against

WHY DOES MARRIAGE ELUDE OUR HEROINES?

HEMA MALINI
Photograph : Rakesh Shreshta

NANDA
Photograph : Nath Gupta

THE LAW

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a demand for dowry cognizable offences in order to avoid frivolous, false or malicious prosecution. Making a demand for dowry is not only a non-cognizable offence, but a party can launch a prosecution only after taking permission from the State (the Commissioner of Police in Greater Bombay and the District Magistrates in the districts). Without this safeguard, let us see what might happen. A boy "views" a girl. He does not "approve" her. Slighted, the girl's parent file a complaint that the boy's father made a demand for dowry.

As observed by Justice S. C. Pratap at the Bombay High Court in December 1980 in a matter concerning a criminal complaint made by a father against his son, "the criminal courts and criminal proceedings cannot be made the arena for seeking private vendetta."

The Dowry Prohibition Act also states that any dowry received, should be transferred within a year's time to the woman on account of whose marriage it was given.

A case which came up before the Andhra Pradesh High Court under this provision was decided in 1978 in favour of the woman. In **Sainbaba v. Mangatayaru 1978 Cri. L. J. 1362 (A.P.),** the father of the bride paid Rs. 8,500 to the bridegroom's father in two instalments before the marriage as dowry. According to Sec. 6 of the Act, this amount should have been transferred to the bride within a year's time. The father-in-law failed to do so. On her first wedding anniversary the woman filed a complaint against her husband and her father-in-law. The judge upheld her complaint and ruled that the dowry should be returned to her.

But how many women would be prepared to take their husbands and in-laws to court for demanding dowry, taking it or failing to return it?

How can the Dowry Prohibition Act be tightened? One suggestion is that "gifts of affection" should have a ceiling of Rs. 500. But how can we enforce this ceiling? We come back to the same problem. When the giver, taker and abettor are all guilty, who will be the complainant?

Another suggestion is that "gifts of affection" to an in-law should be prohibited. Parents should be permitted to give "gifts of affection" to their own children or grandchildren only. However, even this provision could be circumvented by givers and takers of dowry by making the beneficiary of the gift transfer it to the in-laws or the husband. The "gifts of affection" would become dowry by a circuitous route.

The way to eradicate the evil of dowry is not by tightening the provisions of the Dowry Prohibition Act but by making women valuable assets in terms of their own selves.

As long as women do not make themselves capable of earning their own living before getting married, as long as they are prepared to allow their parents to buy a permanent meal-ticket in the shape of a husband, as long as they do not attain equal opportunities, equal responsibilities and equal rights with men, the "evil" of dowry will persist. Marriage will be a commercial transaction instead of being the voluntary and loving union of two people. And we have only ourselves to blame for not making the necessary change in our attitudes.

WHY DOES MARRIAGE ELUDE OUR HEROINES?

marriage. But a girl who has been so successful cannot really settle down with a man who can't equal her success — and success is always measured in terms of money and fame.

Those unfortunate girls who cannot find a bachelor as successful as they, make compromises— the husband is usually reduced to living in his wife's shadow and has to put up with humiliating jibes like Mr. Moushumi, Mr. Vidya Sinha, Mr. Bindu, Mr. Waheeda Rehman, Mr. Tanuja, etc. The other girls have to give up their ambitions early in life to settle down with the first eligible man who'll marry them — Mumtaz, Nargis and Neetu. The ones who've been left behind either spend the rest of their days liaising with married men (Hema, Rekha, Zeenat) or stay single (Asha Parekh, Nanda).

None of the girls is really happy. The ones who've missed the bus show signs of remaining ostensibly satisfied spinsters. The ones who've quit (except for a rare case like Nargis who has remained in the limelight) are not entirely satisfied after the first flush of marriage and family (e.g. Babita, Dimple) felicity wears off. The girls who are entangled with men who cannot marry them remain insecure and envious of other girls' happiness. Of course, the girls who've married men less famous than they are eternally covering up their husbands' inadequacies. They hate to admit that the family is running with the money made by them.

"My husband has his own business. He doesn't need my money," insists Bindu. "My husband comes from a rich family," says Moushumi. Vidya Sinha emphasises that her husband is a successful interior decorator and that the family isn't dependent on her earnings. But generally, the more success a film star gets, the less her chances of personal happiness.

Jaya Bhaduri

Asha Parekh

It is a pessimistic view of a woman's success, but it is the sad truth, a dilemma which these famous girls face. Perhaps that is why a girl like Nanda said that she advised her niece to get married when she was still in her teens so that she doesn't become too choosey in her later years.

Is that the only solution?

PRE-NATAL EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL

A flock of Australian sheep has helped to establish what doctors in many parts of the world have observed clinically — that mothers who drink alcohol run the risk of giving birth to underweight, retarded babies.

The sheep, at a Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization experimental farm on the outskirts of Adelaide, drank the equivalent of a litre of white wine a day for months before conception and during pregnancy. (It was actually a 10 per cent solution of ethanol in water).

Mr. Brian Potter, who conducted the sheep experiment, said two flocks of ewes of proven fertility, living in the same conditions on the same food, had been mated to the same teetotal rams, but one flock drank alcohol and the other only reservoir water.

During the months when the alcohol-drinking sheep's level of consumption was gradually increased to the required 10 per cent ethanol, they became addicted and would not drink normal water if alcohol were available.

The ewes of both flocks had their lambs delivered by Caesarian operations at 140 days, 10 days before a normal full-term pregnancy.

The lambs of the alcohol-drinking sheep were shorter than those of the control flock, with significantly lighter brains, while heart, liver, spleen, kidneys and adrenal glands all weighed less than those of the lambs from ewes which drank no alcohol.

The lower brain weight was accompanied by significant reduction in the number of brain cells.

Some ewes drank less ethanol each day than others which readily conceived, suggesting that susceptibility to the effects of alcohol varies in individuals.

Mr. Potter said his experiments had opened up as many questions as they had answered. These included: Why are some ewes (and people) less affected by alcohol than others? Does individual metabolism have something to do with it, and if so, what aspects? Is a foetus at risk only at a certain stage of development and if the mother does not consume alcohol at that time, will the baby be unaffected by the alcohol she drinks at other times?

Courtesy: Australian Information Service

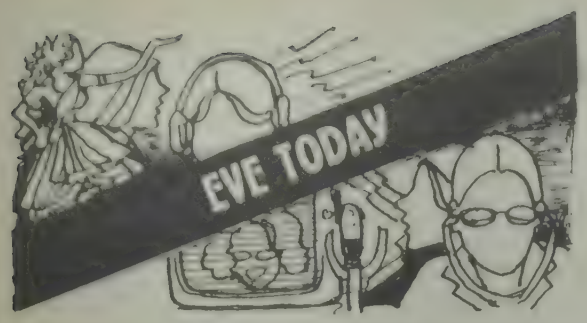
A Living Memorial

The constant reports of suicides in Saurashtra, the terrible killings of daughters-in-law, made me create "Memory is a ragged fragment of eternity" — a dance drama on "suicide." I used Bharatha Natyam, and three of us danced it. It was perhaps the first dance drama of its kind that deviated from the usual "Sringara Rasa" of Bharatha Natyam. I show a young girl, playing with her companions, who is suddenly snatched away and given in marriage. She is faced with a new environment, a hostile group — she is an outsider. Whatever she does is "suspect." Finally she can bear it no longer and commits suicide with her baby in her arms.

The dance drama had a theme, universal to all cultures. Even in faraway Sweden women identified with the victim. A Minister from the South, who had come just to preside at a "show", was so moved that he ordered an investigation of suicides in his State. A national newspaper wrote an editorial about it.

I had not done it with any particular purpose — it was an obsession, and all my obsessions come out in the dance. It is a cry from the heart for understanding.

Mrinalini Sarabhai



Underrated, if noticed at all, women's contributions to society have nevertheless been considerable. Spotlight on women achievers.

SHANNO KHURANA

"music is my mission"

Saroj Vasishth

Shanno Khurana pupil of the famous Ustad Mushtaq Hussain, hit the headlines in Delhi in 1956 when Sheila Bhatia presented Warisshah's "Heer Ranjha" with Shanno in the lead role of Heer. Shanno received her earlier training in Jodhpur from Ragunath Rao Musalgaonkar of Gwalior. Later for her doctorate in music she was guided by the well known musicologist Thakur Jai Devi Singh. Shanno gratefully holds Thakur Sahib responsible for her success in all the examinations she took and for the completion of her thesis on "Khayal Gayaki Mein Vividh Gharane" and "Rajasthan Ka Lok Sangeet".

Shanno was born and brought up in Jodhpur. Her family was forward looking and yet in some respects, conservative. Like she was allowed to take music lessons but was forbidden by her father to sing ghazals.

"My notes depend on my mood, on how engrossed I am in my music," she said. "My Guru taught me not to emulate him. He felt if this is practised rigidly, music will stagnate, it will come to a standstill. A river must flow, tributaries must come in, otherwise it will start stinking. At a later stage he even said — you must move with the times, must take notice of the winds of change, otherwise you might be swept off. Very gently, very slowly, without any hurry he taught me. He knew I was a genuine student. He would sometimes spend more than a month teaching me one 'Bandish'."

Dr. Shanno Khurana is married to a leading Delhi dentist. She is a pioneer of Indian opera singing, which was more or less dormant till 1853 when Agha Hasan Amanat's "Indra Sabha" was presented as a musical drama. It is a recorded fact that the Devil in the production wore an English jacket and trousers (as a sign of contempt for the British), and the fairies wore Europeon costumes with wings. Rabindranath Tagore further encouraged opera with a blend of east and west. He once remarked "My work is not to be understood so much as to be heard — like a flute." The same can be said of Shanno's work, she weaves a musical pattern in her operas that is hypnotic.

Shanno's group **Geetika**, formed by some theatre enthusiasts in 1967, firmly believes that the rich and comprehensive tradition of Indian classical and folk music has not been adequately exploited. **Geetika** presented "Sohni Mahiwal" (Shanno wrote the musical score and Professor Frank Thakurdas produced it) in 1963. Seven years later came Rifat Sarosh's libretto titled "Jahanara". Shanno wrote the musical score and directed the opera. This was followed by "Chitra Lekha" in 1973. Sixty ragas, Balswaroop Rahi's beautiful poetry and B. V. Karanth's magical production attracted full houses and was much appreciated.

In May 1979 **Geetika** presented "Sundari" adapted by Dr. Maheep Singh from the first novel written in the Punjabi language by Bhai Vir Singh. "Sundari" proved to be an extraordinary production, and the part of Sundari turned out to be a personal triumph for Shanno. Said Shanno about "Sundari's" music: "Opera is an art form in which the theatrical action is realised through music and song. The theme of 'Sundari' opened a wide vista for me. The rustic environment of Punjab led to the creation of some lilting tunes. The Shabads from Guru Granth Sahib were set authentically as prescribed in the Guru Granth Sahib itself." As a witness to Shanno's performances in the last two decades I have noticed that she does not hesitate to sacrifice vocal beauty for dramatic effect. She never over decorates her music. Her embellishments are tastefully executed.

As a member of cultural delegations sponsored by the Government of India, Shanno has given recitals among other places, in Greece, Iran, Turkey, Egypt, Syria, Sudan, Afghanistan, Tokyo and Nepal.

"The Nation" of Port Louis, Mauritius made a very interesting statement when it

Continued on Page 58

LEFT : A scene from Shanno's opera "Sundari".

or a complexion
hat looks soft,
eels silky,
diates freshness...
our after hour

MAX FACTOR HI-FI FLUID MAKE-UP

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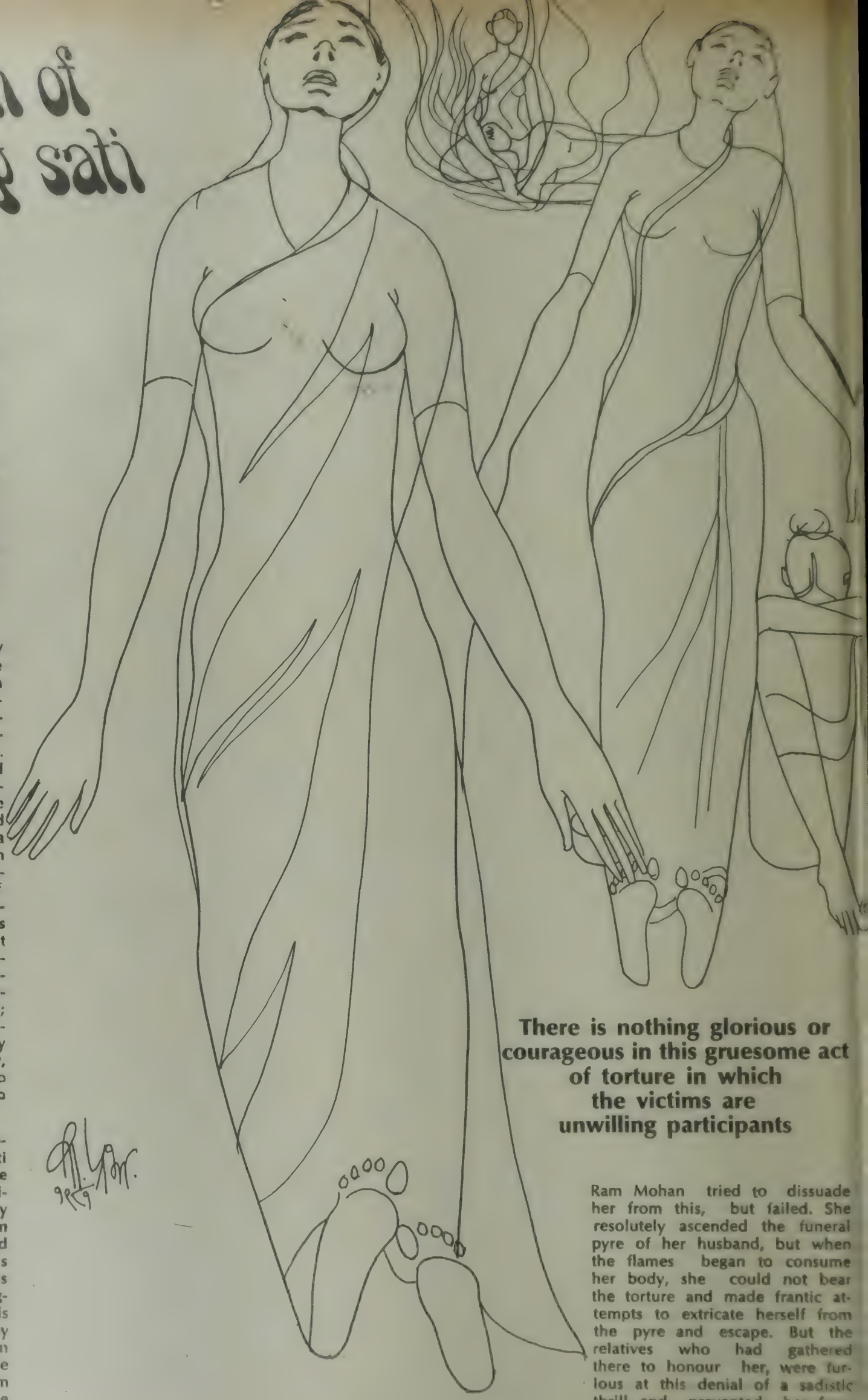
the myth of voluntary sati

Girish M. Vakil

On December 17, 1980 there was a press report that a woman named Guklandi Devi from village Jotanagar in the Gonda Police Circle of Aligarh wanted to perform Sati by burning herself on the pyre of her husband Rampal, but the swift action of the police averted this. The woman was obviously encouraged by the villagers to take this decision to immolate herself. And there have been other instances of this revival of a grisly practice which we had thought was now only a bad memory. And the tragedy is that the very victims of this custom, women, are crusading for this revival as the recent procession taken out in New Delhi shows.

The practice of Sati grew some 500 years ago under the belief, which has no foundation in the Shastras, that a wife should be eternally with her husband and should therefore follow him into the funeral pyre. This was of course an absurd superstition even when the Hindu marriage was indissoluble but now, when separation and divorce are so common, it is a criminal contempt of human life. And some Hindu women, partly in sincere belief and partly under social pressure, are falling victim to this macabre revival. The pity of it is that a section of women should do this after the International Women's Year was observed with so much fanfare; that when women are demanding their rights so vigorously and winning the battle slowly, there should be some who would set the clock back to medieval days.

The practice of Sati was abolished by the passing of the Sati Abolition Act, 1829. And the moving spirit behind the abolition was Raja Ram Mohan Roy during the rule of Lord William Bentinck. It was he who carried on a relentless battle against this blot on Hindu society, and his horror of it was based on a poignant personal experience in his own family. Ram Mohan Roy had a brother named Jagmohan Roy who died in 1811. His wife was devotedly attached to him and she resolved not to live after her husband's death. So she insisted on performing Sati.



There is nothing glorious or courageous in this gruesome act of torture in which the victims are unwilling participants

Ram Mohan tried to dissuade her from this, but failed. She resolutely ascended the funeral pyre of her husband, but when the flames began to consume her body, she could not bear the torture and made frantic attempts to extricate herself from the pyre and escape. But the relatives who had gathered there to honour her, were furious at this denial of a sadistic thrill and prevented her from climbing down from the pyre by pushing her back with bam-

boos. And they drowned her agonised screams by beating vigorously on drums.

Shocked by this sight of mindless cruelty and degradation of religion, Raja Ram Mohan Roy took a vow that he would release Hindu women from this martyrdom. Thereafter he started his campaign against Sati in right earnest and by his public speeches and writings aroused the public conscience against this monstrous custom. Persuaded by his eloquence and pleas for justice to women, Lord Bentinck prohibited the immolation of widows and the Sati Abolition Act was passed in 1829.

But orthodoxy and obscurantism do not admit defeat so easily. They raised their ugly heads in 1927 — just about a century after Sati was abolished and about half a century before the present efforts at revival.

One Sampati Kaur, daughter of one Keshav Pande of village Berna in Bihar, was married to one Sidheshwar who died on November 21, 1927.

Early in the morning the next day a police constable noticed a large group of people resting in a shed in the compound of the Sub-Divisional Magistrate at Barh. They had with them Sidheshwar's corpse. On inquiry he was told that they were on their way to the burning ghat on the banks of the Ganges about two miles further to the north. But he saw a woman sitting near the group and was told that Sampati was going to commit Sati.

The constable hurried to the police station to take steps to avert the tragedy and returned with two other police constables to stop the woman from performing Sati. The party however refused to listen to the constables in spite of their threats to get the party arrested.

But Sampati was ready to give up Sati martyrdom and so the corpse proceeded to the burning ghat accompanied by the funeral party, without Sampati, her brother and two other relatives.

Sampati was to go back to her father's house at Berna. But suddenly a senior member of the funeral party named Vidyasagar arrived there accompanied by a big crowd shouting, "Sati mata ki jai!" The 15 constables were helpless against the crowd of determined men. They could only appeal. But Sampati, swayed by mob psychology, had become convinced that she would become immortal as a true Sati The corpse was put on the pyre. She took her seat on it and took the head of the corpse on her lap. Then the funeral pyre was lit with great enthusiasm and cheering. Like the phoenix, Hinduism would be born again from the ashes of the young woman.

But when her sari caught fire and her flesh felt the searing pain, poor Sampati leapt from the fire and rushed towards the river, to douse the flames. The Pandes rushed after her with the corpse which had slipped down from the pyre and threw it into the Ganges. Denied the ecstacy of watching the first Sati in a 100 years, the men earnestly urged Sampati, now struggling in the water, to drown herself and give them at least a watered down version of the Sati. But some policemen found a boat and rescued the drowning girl. She was placed under a tree moaning with the agony of severe burns. It took a few hours to find a doctor, but when he came the crowd chased him away and the police were prevented from taking her to the hospital. She remained there under the tree for two whole days unattended but surrounded by a crowd of men watching her agony.

On November 24 the Sub-Divisional Magistrate arrived at the scene and drove away the crowd. But it was too late and Sampati could not be saved and she died the following day. In her memory a little shrine was erected on the spot sometime later and it is said that it exists even today and women go and worship there.

After Sampati's death, the police took up the investigation and some persons were arrested. A charge sheet was filed against 16 persons and they were tried for offences under sections 149 and 306 of the Indian Penal Code. The Sessions Judge acquitted six persons and the remaining ten accused were sent to the High Court of Patna for trial. There they were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment.

Such is the sordid story of the first attempt at reviving this barbaric rite of Sati — not a story of heroism and transcendent loyalty, but a story of human cruelty, rampant obscurantism and male chauvinistic arrogance. We can only hope that women of this day and age will not allow their misguided sisters to glorify and revive this supreme denial of women's claim to be individuals in their own right even their right to life itself.

SATI : A DISTURBING REVIVAL

Continued from page 17

This sudden interest in Sati has obviously been sparked off by the recent spate of Sati cases in Rajasthan. According to one article published, there have been at least seven incidents of Sati in that state this year. "India Today", in its Oct. issue, reported the case of 16-year-old Om Kanwar who, dressed in all her bridal splendour, committed Sati with the body of her young dead husband in her lap. Crowds of curious onlookers collected, but not a single person lifted a finger to stop the gruesome goings on.

Obviously, the attitudes towards Sati are still medieval, riddled with deep-rooted superstition and misplaced notions of the Rajasthani woman's valour. Such attitudes need to be opposed relentlessly. Even the Inspector-General of Police of Rajasthan, Mr. Amar Singh Kochar, was quoted as having commented, "Religion and the law aside, one will have to admit it was a courageous act." And yet, this same IGP cited instances to the magazine's reporter of young girls who tried to escape being burnt alive by jumping off the pyre, but were stopped by their family and others and were forcibly dragged back to the burning pyre. If this is not cold-blooded murder, what is it?

But Mr. Kochar explained, "Legally we treat it as a case of suicide and the family members are challenged. . .It is physically impossible to take action against thousands of people (who witness the event). . ." And it is left at that. No, not even at that; when the site where the young and misguided Om Kanwar burnt herself to death, was promptly transformed into a place of pilgrimage, it was reported that local politicians encouraged it, and Congress (I) MLAs "were conspicuous by their presence."

Vested interests, particularly political vested interests, always have their role to play in these affairs. And more so when it is such a sensitive issue. "We know for sure," said a member of the Rani Sati Seva Sangh, "that these people want to make a political issue out of it. Some Opposition parties have approached us and said that they will take up the issue on our behalf. But we said nothing doing to them."

Whatever their true motives for building this new temple in Delhi, the Sangh people claim that the reasons are very pragmatic. They want to collect funds for their various welfare organisations (among which they profess are homes for women, libraries, schools, etc). If they go around asking for donations, they say, nobody gives them money If they build a mandir to Rani Sati the public will pour out their money as offerings to her! they insist that they are in no way propagating Sati.

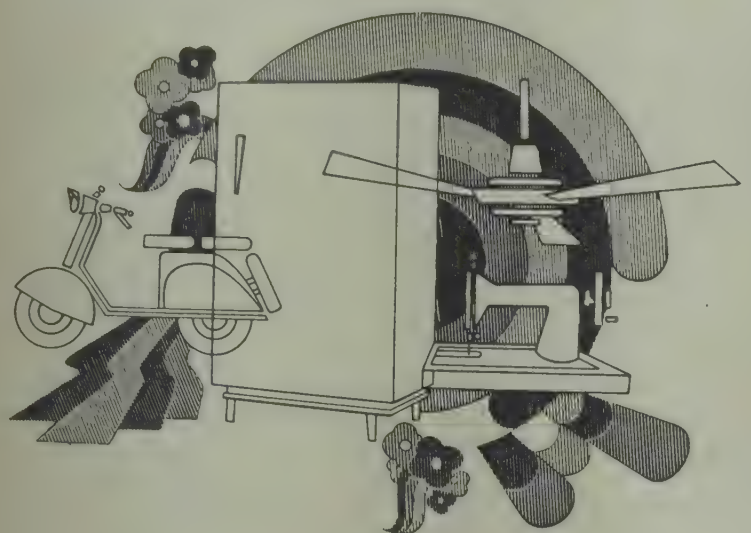
This of course, remains a moot point, for even the mere worship of a woman who ostensibly turned goddess by virtue of her committing Sati, could have subtle suggestions for credulous women. However, the Shri Rani Sati Seva Sangh people, both men and women, are profuse in their assurances that this was not so. On the contrary, they claim, they have been encouraging widow remarriage in their community and widows are normally accepted in their families without any stigma.

"So who can say that we are encouraging the practice by building a temple?" they argue. "It is the Rajput women in Rajasthan who have recently been performing Sati. And we would like to ask the government, these women MPs and these women's organisations who made such a noise at our procession: What have you done about those cases in Rajasthan? Isn't it a crime to commit Sati? So why has nothing been done there?"

Pertinent questions. But who's to answer them? Certainly, there has been not a single women's organisation that has bothered to go into Rajasthan to investigate what has really been happening. And the government has characteristically responded with complacency and neglect.

Whether or not the militant anti-Sati women's group in Delhi made any dent in the zeal and enthusiasm of the Shri Rani Sati Seva Sangh, the incident did bring into focus the entire question of the revival of the practice of Sati that has been occurring. It can be of no use whatsoever for the Prime Minister and her government to over-react to a temple being built in their city. What needs their more immediate and serious attention are the incidents that have taken place in Rajasthan of this barbaric, cruel and inhuman ritual. How many more girls and women will need to be sacrificed at the altar of obscurantism and Hindu revivalism before they decide to take action?

Save a little regularly, and everything you've always dreamt of is yours.



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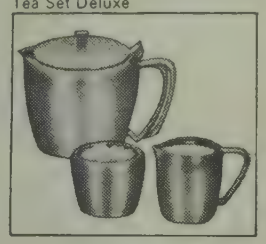

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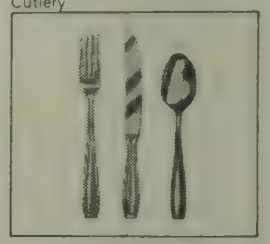

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NEW TECHNIQUES FOR AN OLD ART

SHAN BLAKE & LOU SCHMIDT

In ancient times, pottery had been a field dominated by women. In some cases, men had even been prohibited from approaching while the work was in progress. But with the advent of the wheel, which required physical strength, pottery gradually became a male prerogative. However today, in our technological civilization, we see women who have successfully carved out a niche for themselves in the beautiful world of hand-made pottery. Two such experts, Shan Blake from Australia and Lou Schmidt from Switzerland attended a recent 12-day workshop-cum-seminar on "Pottery and its teaching" organised by The Crafts Council of Western India and the Sir J. J. School of Art in Bombay. Besides these two reputed potters, Robert Bussabarger from the U.S.A., several distinguished potters in the city and village potters from districts of Maharashtra and Gujarat attended the workshop.

Industrial and technological advances in our country have resulted to a large extent in the gradual disappearance of hand-made pottery. Competition from mass-produced, manufactured goods has pushed the rural potter, faced with impoverishment, to migrate to towns and cities in search of a more lucrative living.

Shan Blake, tall, dark-haired and attractive, was busy with the construction of a new kiln at the Sir J. J. School when I met her. A qualified teacher of ceramics, she has set up workshops in Australia for the production of functional ware and participated in numerous exhibitions.

"In India, the average temperature obtained in kilns is only 800 degrees C to 900 degrees C, at most 1000 degrees C," explained Shan. Higher temperatures are required for proper glazing, she said. The success of firing also depends upon the kiln temperature. An improved kiln can increase the efficiency of the potters as well as improve the quality of their products. "The kiln I am helping to build will have a maximum temperature of 1300 degrees C."

Shan Blake supervising the setting up of a kiln.

Lou Schmidt demonstrating to a 'kumbhar'.

Shan was eloquent in her praise for the Indian potter. "They are very good, in fact among the best," she enthused. "When I told my friends in Australia that I was coming to India, they wondered what I could teach potters in this country!"

The main drawback of our kumbhars, felt Shan, was the limited range of articles they produced. The pots and vessels they make are redundant in modern society. But under no circumstances can manual craftsmanship be considered superfluous. The demand for hand-made pottery amply expresses the desire for authentic, personal and unique ware in our urban and modern life.

The kumbhar's basic design sense is excellent, she said. But he requires assistance in mastering the art of glazing. Unlike the studio potters, the knowledge of glazing among the village potters in India is "practically nil" said Shan. The building of the right kind of kilns will greatly help overcome this difficulty.

Shan was emphatic when she said that "the traditional history of crafts in India must be encouraged," with not only financial aid, but introduction of new techniques. The art is gradually dying out in the villages. This is sad, she said, as the kumbhars are "very artistic people with original ideas" who are capable of creating beautiful table-ware that could compete with the commercially marketed varieties.

Lou Schmidt, a slim, frizzy-haired blonde, has held many exhibitions and won many prizes and distinctions. Glazing is Lou's real forte, and during the workshop, she supervised the composition of clay bodies and taught the art of simple glazing, known as 'Slip-glaze'.

Actually the kind of kilns the village potters use cannot be used for glazing, she said. These kilns have a single wall, inside which the cotton-waste fuel is heaped over the pots that are to be fired. Lou has experimented with a new kind of kiln with two walls, where cotton-waste fuel is burnt, and does not come in contact with the articles being fired.

In Indian villages, the potters make pots to store their grain and water. Basic necessity predominates over design, shape or colour. But with some modern know-how and techniques, they can produce articles with a better finish which will find a ready market in urban societies.

The potters should be fully aware of the range of articles they can create, felt Lou. Hand-made pottery should not just mean ash-trays and vases. Beautiful and functional table-ware has become fashionable today. Besides being exclusive in shape and design, hand-made ware is a welcome change from the monotony of commercially manufactured products. Tiles of artistic designs and colours are being made for floors and ceilings.

Asked about her opinion of our Indian potters, Lou exclaimed "They are very good and perfect throwers."

The interest and enthusiasm shown by these two experts from abroad will be truly rewarded if the knowledge and guidance imparted by them help the kumbhars of this region to keep alive their ancient traditional art of pottery.

Anjana Jha

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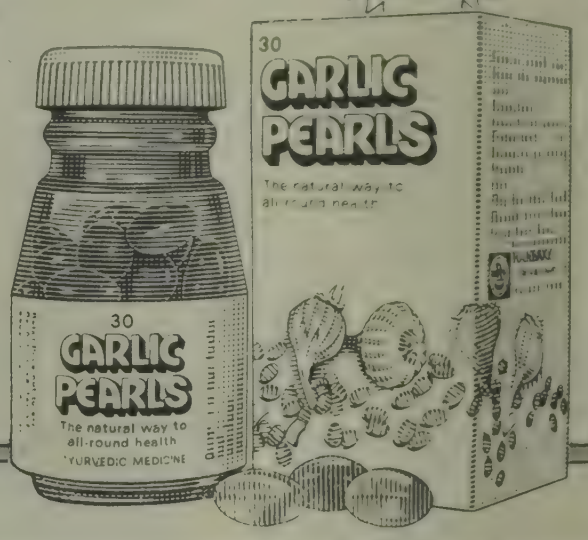

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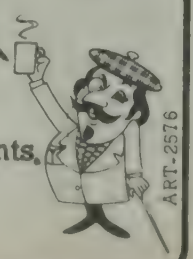

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SAFE WATER: LUXURY FOR RURAL POOR

Water may be an ordinary commodity, but it is a luxury millions of people in Asia and the Pacific region cannot still afford to have, much less enjoy.

Experts point out that safe (potable) water is becoming a scarce resource. In fact, it is available only to a small percentage of the rural population in the Asia/Pacific region, which numbers around 845 million.

Statistics on some 20 countries and territories in Asia and the Pacific region indicates that only three of them — Bangladesh, Fiji and Tonga — are able to provide 50 to 70 per cent of their rural people with safe water. In 11 other countries — Afghanistan, Burma, India, Indonesia, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam — only five to 20 per cent of the residents in rural communities have potable water supply. In the last group of six nations — Iran, Malaysia, Republic of Korea, Philippines, Samoa and Solomon Islands — safe water coverage reaches only 23 to 49 per cent of their villagers.

The World Health Organization (WHO) study says that access to water resources is vital for the rural communities. Without water they will be unable to produce sufficient food to maintain a reasonable calorific intake, and health will be poor. Consequently, improvement of their quality of life will be difficult to attain. The study also states that social productivity and economic growth rely on a sound health base which, in turn, is dependent on water resources development and primary health care facilities in the rural areas.

The major sectors of water resources development in the ESCAP region include irrigation, hydro-electric power, flood control and urban and rural water supply. However, new strategies are needed if more people in Asia and the Pacific region, particularly those in the rural areas, are to be provided adequate water of suitable quality for consumption at home, as well as for their agricultural or industrial pursuits.

The construction of large — and medium-scale dams had increased the area of arable land under irrigation in 16 Asian countries to 383.2 million hectares, as of 1977. Breakdown by subregion, gives the percentage of irrigated lands as follows: **East Asia** (China and Republic of Korea), 46 per cent; **South Asia** (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Iran, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka), 27 per cent; and **Southeast Asia** (Burma, Indonesia, Laos People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam), 20 per cent.

An appraisal of the development and management of water resources indicates that there is great potential for irrigation development in several countries of the ESCAP region for increasing their foodgrain production.

However, the benefits from large dams and big hydro-electric power projects have benefited only a relatively few people at the village level. Their income has increased, and their property has appreciated in value.

A Natural Resources Committee document attributes this unequal distribution of grains to lack of planning for the farmer's end of the water delivery system. Some canal distribution systems have not been completed and, even where they were built, no provisions were made for operation and maintenance.

In Northeast Thailand, large schemes supply irrigation water to only about three per cent of the population in that area. By improving the distribution systems, however, coverage could be expanded to 8.9 per cent — more than twice the present number of beneficiaries.

Large dams and hydro-electric power plants also have adverse effects on environmental health. The WHO study says that large-scale water resource projects can disturb the natural balance of the ecosystem and have known to lead to unexpected problems with water-related parasitic diseases arising from, for example, mosquito breeding in poorly drained areas, shallow water fringes around impoundments, leading to malaria, filariasis, and even yellow fever and dengue in certain regions.

The WHO study stresses that the success of any strategy aimed at developing water resources largely depends on the participation of the people. The self-help approach is essential to success, and countries must accept it and plan for its incorporation in programmes of rural water supply and sanitation.

Another water problem concerns the competing demand for water for agriculture, community water supply and industry. With a given land area and specific crops, the amount of water for agriculture is more or less of fixed quantity. Population growth and rising standards of living will continue to increase the demand for community water supply.

It is however, in the industrial sector that the greatest scope for adjustment in the use of water exists. Modern technology has developed new techniques for reducing the use of water in some industries, as well as in the generation of hydro-electric power. But most of the new methods are energy-intensive. The current crisis in energy production world-wide might have an effect on the future growth in water requirements for both the industrial sector and the thermal electric power sector.

Courtesy: UNICEF Feature Service

THE EGOISTS

Continued from page 25

ed to take her in his arms. He started, "Sadhna..." when someone rushed in and said, "Sir, Mr. Tiwari wants to talk to you urgently." "Sadhna, I'm leaving tonight. 'Bye," he whispered, and taking his glasses, left. She sat there staring at the door.

In the evening, when she reached home, she felt defeated and depressed. She was fed up with leading this lonely, aimless, loveless life. She cursed herself for not having made up with him. She had missed the bus again. She wondered what they had gained by this false pride. They had achieved nothing but a sense of emptiness. There was still that softness in his voice, which she knew he had only for her. His eyes told her that there was no anger against her now, but only abundant love and affection. But why couldn't he say so, take her in his arms again?

The door bell rang. It was Arvind, he seemed in a hurry. "Sadhna," he said, "Vijay has asked me to take you to the airport You know, he told me everything. He said that he was ashamed to ask you himself to go back with him. He wasn't sure if you would agree." He noticed her hesitation. "Come on Sadhna, don't waver now. This may be your last chance. And you know how much you want to go back to him. Here, I've brought your resignation letter, sign it. Now pack up a few things fast and come along. You can come again and take up the rest of your things."

She stood there uncertainly. Arvind urged her again and she quickly packed a small suitcase, locked up the house and got into Arvind's car. They remained silent during that long drive. Arvind held Sadhna's hand and she did not pull it away. She felt too grateful for the way he had put her happiness above his own. Had he been selfish, as most other men would have been, he could easily have stalled and prevented her rejoining Vijay.

They reached the airport and Arvind handed her the suitcase and air ticket. He pointed towards Vijay, who was standing with his back towards them near the baggage counter. She hesitated again. Vijay didn't seem to be expecting anybody very eagerly. But Arvind pushed her forward and said softly. "Sadhna, he is waiting for you."

She started hesitantly, but then quickened her pace without looking back. As she reached halfway, Vijay suddenly turned around and surprise showed on his face. She knew at once that Arvind had lied. Vijay had not spoken to him at all. She looked back at Arvind and he nodded. "Yes," he seemed to say. "It was a lie, but it is best for you." She smiled at him tremulously and then, squaring her shoulders, strode towards Vijay Smiling radiantly, his eyes like stars, Vijay took two quick steps and enveloped her in a tight embrace. When he released her, she turned around, but Arvind was gone.

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By An Alves Called Johnnie

GIRLS ARE BORN IN THE YEAR ONLY GOD KNOWS WHEN

Honey, the charming Prince of Wales was in India recently and he didn't look anywhere near 32 years old, which he is reported to be. He looks a charming 25. Men grow gracefully because man is as old as he feels, but unfortunately women are as old as they look and that is why they stay longer in certain age groups. They remain three years at nineteen, five at twenty-five and for ten long years they are a charming thirty.

But honey, just because man gets older faster, don't think he is any the worse for it. For man life begins at any age he wants it to commence. Take the case of my friend Domnic. He is 80 today, plays tennis and a round of golf every Saturday. He can chase a female round a block that could make a 30-year-old feel ashamed of himself. He got married last year to a young girl of 21. Everybody pitied the young wife. So we thought of a scheme to help the girl. We suggested to Domnic to keep a boarder who would be a companion to her. Younger than he was, say around 25. He readily agreed. In fact, he thought it was a brilliant idea. A year later I met him at the club and said, "Domi, how's the wife?" "Oh great," he said, "she's pregnant." "That's wonderful," I said thinking that the scheme hd worked. I then asked him, "And how's the boarder?" "She's fine. She too is pregnant."

I have another friend around 70, but with plenty of sexperience. Girls are always running through his mind, and he runs after them. His wife Anne is a sport, she lets him have his fun. "Let him run after them as much as he likes," she says. "Once he catches them, he won't remember why he ran after them."

Luv, it is said that there is no such thing as a faithful husband, especially if he is above 40. Don't get me wrong husbands, it is not my personal opinion. I am inclined to agree with Voltaire who, when asked to make a short funeral oration said, "Here lies a man who was a sturdy patriot, a gifted writer, a loyal friend and a faithful husband... provided of course, that he is really dead."

Since women as a rule tend to lie about their age, I think it would be a good gesture from judges if they asked women to state their age first and then take the oath to tell the truth. Or it would be best to believe them... after all, anybody who sticks to the same story for ten years has to be telling the truth.

Why is it that men celebrate their birthdays and women don't? It's simple luv — birthdays are anniversaries on which husbands take a day off and wives take a year off. It's silly really, to keep hiding one's years, especially if they keep showing. Take my friend Noel. She was once a sight for sore eyes. Honey, she had so many curves, next to her a cockscrew would look straight. Today at fifty she still thinks she is 35, and what is worse, still believes she has the curves.

As I said, sweetheart, men will be men and women will be women. The former lie about sex, the latter about age. There's a story of a man named James who died at a very advanced age. He was a good and upright man. So when he reached the gates of Heaven, he was received with open arms. Some months later his friend died and also went to Heaven. He saw James with a beautiful girl on his lap. "I'am so glad," said his friend, "to see that you have been justly rewarded." James turned sadly to his friend and said, "It's not my reward. It happens to be her punishment."

Until next time then.

YOUNG VIEWPOINT

Continued from page 29

University there is complete communal harmony. Then where is the reason for the government to interfere with its affairs?

Another cause for much concern is Urdu. A language considered to be one of the sweetest in the world, is receiving stepmotherly treatment in the very country of its birth. So much injustice has been done to it that it is on the verge of extinction. Even in predominantly Urdu speaking areas, it does not even enjoy the status of a second language. Even important leaders of some of the national political parties have gone on record saying that Urdu is an alien language in India.

As a result of such intense discrimination Muslims feel agitated, and this agitation reaches its climax when during communal riots the government takes a partisan stand. Communal riots are nothing but the manifestation of the psychology of fear — fanned by mutual hatred. Thus a simple incident involving "goondas" belonging to different communities is given a communal colour and vested interests jump into the fray, turning it into a communal riot. The government generally fails to cope with the situation, and communal elements within the government take full advantage of it and follow a partisan attitude. The role of the PAC and the Central Reserve Police in the recent riots is a pointer to this fact. And. to add insult to injury, responsible government officers and big guns in the State Government issue completely baseless, irresponsible and at times even contradictory statements.

The question which arises now is, can these problems be solved? Will the Muslims be able to achieve the distinction of being a 1st class citizen? The answer is, they can; but only if the government gives up its communal attitude and step-motherly treatment, and provides due constitutional rights to all its citizens. The majority community should accept their Muslim brethren as their younger brothers, and see to it that only those elements enter Parliament, who are really secular in words as in deeds. The Muslims should also realise that a basically Muslim organization will not help, as communal elements will creep in; nor would the demand for a fixed percentage of "representation" be desirable. After all, it served as the basis of Pakistan, and we cannot afford to have any more Pakistans.

It is with the healthy and active cooperation and understanding between the two major communities of India that communalism can be weeded out and Muslims get their due share. Only a truly secular Parliament and a truly secular government machinery — as under Siddhartha Shankar Ray in Bengal — can give Muslims their due share. For this the majority community has to take the initiative. Further, basic institutions like the family, educational institutions — teachers and text-books the social institutions — clubs, etc., and the media — press, cinema, TV, A.I.R; — all should strive to create an ideal situation for a secular society. It may sound utopian but there is no other way out.

BOMBAY

Funded by the CERES Medal and Money Programme of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. The Institute of Hotel Management, Catering Technology and Applied Nutrition has organised a workshop to train people in job oriented training for girls in rural areas. The workshop was inaugurated by Mrs. Pramila Yagnik, Minister for Slum Development and Housing, Maharashtra, in the Belfield-Smith Auditorium of the Institute.

The objective of the national workshop is to use the infrastructure of the Institute to train about 20 national trainers who are involved in training the rural population, specifically young girls in job oriented courses Integrated into the training programme, are subjects like Nutrition, Health Care, Sanitation and Food Technology at grass root level. This programme is envisaged to benefit a segment of the population which is at present neglected. Since the programme is integrated with health care, nutrition, etc., a major objective of the Institute is also met. Participants are selected from different parts of the country and are representatives of a variety of trades which can be suitably implemented at the rural level.

* * *

Encouraged by the tremendous success of the Festival of Crafts organised in 1980, Shilpi Kendra, in collaboration with the All India Handicrafts Board, organised a second Festival in January 1981 at the Cawasji Jehangir Hall. This Festival was planned on a larger scale. Ten Marketing and Service Extension Centres from seven States of India participated with the best of their handicrafts. Over sixty master craftsmen were also present and gave daily demonstrations of a variety of crafts, in wood, metal, paper, textiles etc. The Festival of Crafts was inaugurated by the Governor of Maharashtra, Air Chief Marshal (Retd.) O.P. Mehra.

* * *

"Blossoms" presents a sale of exclusive embroidered bed sheets, pillow covers with matching towel sets, towelling robes, napkins and serviettes.

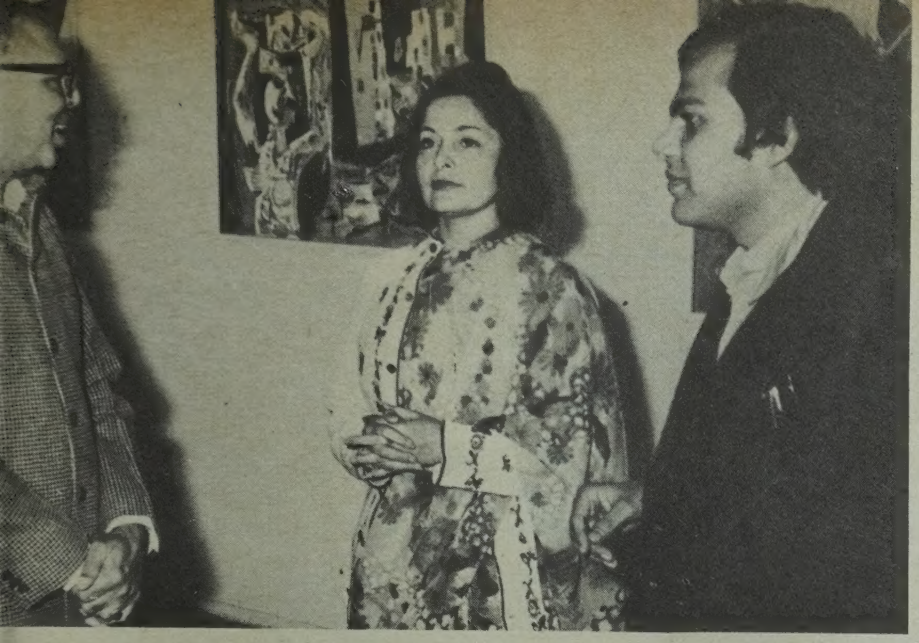
Organdie saris and dainty handkerchiefs will also be on display. All the items have been designed by Naina and Neetu Daswani. The exhibition-cum-sale will be held at Breach Candy

LEFT : Miss Thangam E. Philip, Principal of the Institute of Hotel Management, Catering Technology & Applied Nutrition, Bombay, welcomes the chief guest Mrs. Pramila Yagnik, Minister for Slum Development and Housing, Maharashtra (ext. left), at the inauguration of the Institute's National Workshop. Also seen are Mrs. Pratima R. Bhatt, Prof. G. S. Kadu, and Dr. (Brig) K. Pennathur.

The Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, inaugurated the Bharathi Kala Manram Building Complex at Chunabatti, Bombay. Also seen are a volunteer; Dr. V. Subramaniam, MLA, President of the Manram; and Air Chief Marshal (Retd.) O. P. Mehra, Governor of Maharashtra.

LEFT : At the Festival of Crafts organised by Shilpi Kendra, Bombay, are seen Mrs. Satya Mehra and Mrs. Thrity Taleyarkhan with a craftsman.

Mrs. Satya Mehra and Shreya Dalal seen at the latter's exhibition of creations in shells and plants held at Eka Art Gallery, Bombay.



At an exhibition of paintings held by Miss M. Grover at the Lalit Kala Akademi, Delhi, are seen Mr. Raghavan, Income Tax Commissioner, the artist, and a guest.

A farewell party was hosted by Mr. and Mrs. Bhupinder Singh Sarna (1st and 3rd from left) for Mr. and Mrs. A. V. Shah of Flury's (2nd & 4th from left) in Calcutta recently.

LEFT : Miss Yogini Bhagwatiprasad Pandya, a Sanskrit scholar, receiving three medals from Mr. Prabodh Raval, Minister of Education, at the Convocation ceremony held by Gujarat University in Ahmedabad.

BELOW: The foundation stone for a slum school of the Bangalore National Council was laid Mr. R. Gundu Rao, Chief Minister of Karnataka (3rd from right). Also seen are Mr. K. Thimmapa, Mrs. P. Aiyappa and Mrs. R. Rajendran.

School, above Premsons, 63 Bhulabhai Desai Road, on February 14 and 15, from 10 a.m. to 7.30 p.m.

* * *

As part of the counselling and guiding work of the Counselling and Guidance Centre of the Women Graduates Union, a lecture series has been arranged on February 14 and 28, and March 14 and 28. 1981, at Amy Rustomiee Hall.

The talks will deal basically with practical and simple methods of dealing with children and the speakers include Mrs. Duru Gada, Dr. L. P. Shah, Mrs. Ummehani Nagarwala and Mrs. Meenakshi Apte.

* * *

Holiday Inn, Bombay, will hold a five-day Zambian Festival from February 11 to 15, 1981. This is the first ever culinary exhibition to be held in the city. Besides a variety of Zambian dishes, carvings, crafts and traditional dances will also be exhibited — all specially flown in by Zambia Airways.

DELHI

Miss M. Grover's exhibition of water colours and oil paintings at the Lalit Kala Akademi, attracted a lot of visitors and art lovers. The exhibition was inaugurated by the Minister for Supplies and Rehabilitation, Mr. Bhagwat Jha Azad.

CALCUTTA

The Sindhi Ladies Club held a coffee party at the Sindhi Panchayat to raise funds for the charitable clinic run by them in the city. A skit was also put up.

The rest of the money was raised from little gifts each member offered as lucky-dip prizes.

* * *

Mr. H. Singh, Managing Director of Oriental Travel Service held a delightful reception at his New Alipore residence in honour of Air Marshal L. M. Katre AOC-in-C, Eastern Command, and Mrs. Katre. The select gathering included Consul Generals of USA, USSR, Poland, Hungary, Bangladesh and Nepal.

* * *

The Takeda Marionette Theatre from Japan performed at Rabindra Sadan under the joint sponsorship of the Information & Cultural Affairs Department, the Consulate of Japan in Calcutta and the Japan Foundation in Tokyo. The show was ingenious in its presentation of folk lore shown with a stylized beauty which is a characteristic of Japanese puppetry. The background music was much more modern, being mostly Bach. The present Marionette theatre claims descent from the troupe first formed in 1660 or thereafter, a reminder that puppetry in Japan has flourished for more than a thousand years.

BANGALORE

The Karnataka chief minister, Mr. R. Gundu Rao laid the foundation stone for a slum school building, which is a project of the National Council of Women in India (Bangalore Branch). Mrs. Renuka Rajendran, Minister for Small Scale Industries presided over the function. Mr. K. Thimmapa, Minister for P.W.D. was the guest speaker. Mrs. Polly Aiyappa, President of the Council welcomed the gathering. Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Iyer proposed a vote of thanks.

AHMEDABAD

Nalini Sarees will hold an exhibition-cum-sale of sarees and readymade churidar-kameez sets on February 7 and 8, 1981, at Bikaka Hall, near Law Garden.

BHOPAL

The Central Bank Mahila Mandal was formed recently at the instance of Mrs. Sudha Satyanarayan Rao who is the President of the Mandal. The Mandal's objective is to foster a spirit of oneness amongst the staff as a well-knit family, to discover and encourage talent in kids and families. It is organising a cultural show depicting the basic unity and oneness amidst diversity of Indian culture, which is truly reflected in the Bank's staff and the population of Bhopal.

In the short span of slightly over a month the Mandal has organised a blood donation programme and distribution of clothes and utensils to slum dwellers.

FOR THE WEEK
FEB. 8 — 14, 1981

John Naylor

IF IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY THIS WEEK:

You will enjoy a most varied year, your ambitions will progress. A colourful phase for romance and social activity. You will form a special relationship with a person of artistic temperament, gifted, kindly, but rather unworldly. Although you will profit from this association, this person could bring problems into your affairs just after mid-year, and will need your practical help and support for a time. In general, friendships will help advance your interests. You will have the chance to increase your earnings, perhaps by forming a new business partnership. However, in all such negotiations, do not overlook those minor, but important, details.

ARIES
(March 22 — April 20)

Seize the chance to delegate work, to offload a task you are finding a bore. People will co-operate pleasingly, both at work and at home. You will soon be into a busy, fortunate, phase; begin to organise for this.

TAURUS
(April 21 — May 21)

This week brings a happy new phase for the lighter side of life, also more practical matters and you will see a way to improve your set-up. A rather nicely balanced period when you'll enjoy both work and play.

GEMINI
(May 22 — June 21)

An offer of a job or business link could come your way shortly. Domestic conditions will improve. Long-term financial matters are favoured; a good time to see whether insurance and investments need updating.

CANCER
(June 22 — July 23)

Don't be content to stay in a pleasant rut; seek fresh opportunities. It is a time to be a little more adventurous. Get out and about, socially, this week, respond to overtures of friendship.

LEO
(July 24 — Aug 23)

Mars has moved out of opposition to your sign, so that tension will ease, but Venus moves into this position, so the accent is on the affairs of your partner, and colleagues, and they have the advantage

VIRGO
(Aug 24 — Sept 23)

People will be demanding, eager to take advantage of your talents and your good nature. Fit in with the arrangements of loved ones as far as you can, but don't neglect your own personal concerns.

LIBRA
(Sept 24 — Oct 23)

You will have extra energy, but use some of this for the lighter side of life. There is luck in social contacts, as a friendly tip could help you. Romance is well starred; the 9th and 12th could be important dates.

SCORPIO
(Oct 24 — Nov 22)

Changes in the affairs of people close to you will help your own activities, so keep in touch with happenings around you. Lively stars help you cultivate fresh contacts, businesswise, in an informal atmosphere.

SAGITTARIUS
(Nov 23 — Dec 22)

You could be on the move, at home or at work. Future financial security will also come under review and you might need to update your ideas. Communication is favoured, so inquire and explore.

CAPRICORN
(Dec 23 — Jan 20)

Friendships and carefree activities are highlighted; you will be expanding your social life soon. A good week for money matters, for spending or saving; you will get a good deal either way. Get your plans into shape.

AQUARIUS
(Jan 21 — Feb 19)

Venus is in your sign, makes for romance, close relationships. Life should be fun as well as rather lucky. If you have been working hard recently, there will be pleasant repercussions from more than one direction.

PISCES
(Feb 20 — March 21)

Your affairs and fortunes should benefit from a series of helpful transits now moving through Pisces. Mars, now in your sign, is favourable for health. A positive mood will now aid you.

"MUSIC IS MY MISSION"

Continued from page 42

reviewed Shanno's performance in 1976: "Shanno with her superb voice and delicacy combined with great intensity performs with a lyrical sensibility and fastidious craftsmanship." "Magazine Opera", London, wrote in 1970; "The production of a new opera 'Jahanara' has marked the latest stage in an attempt to give India an operatic idiom of her own, but having a link with the Western tradition. That it has come about at all, has been almost entirely due to the vision and drive of the Indian composer and classical singer Shanno Khurana".

Shanno has many firsts to her credit. She is the first woman Director of Music ("Heer Ranjha" followed by four full length operas). She is the first musicologist in India to use classical music in opera idiom in the context of contemporary theatre. Besides having a brilliant academic record she is the first woman to receive a Doctorate in Music from the Indira Sangeet Vishva Vidyalaya, Kairagarh.

Last year the Bhartiya Natya Sangh awarded her the Delhi Natya Sangh's annual award for her contribution to the world of classical music and opera. "Shobhna", a Delhi magazine, chose her for their annual award for the best classical singer, for the year 1980. She was also a recipient of the Sur Mai Award, Bombay, in 1974.

Besides singing for All India Radio and Television, Shanno is an active participant in seminars. Recently she gave a lucid lecture demonstration at the Sri Ram Centre for Art and Culture when it organised a four-day seminar on "Different Gharana's and Khayal Gayaki." She spoke about her Ustad's Rampur Gharana (which was earlier known as Sainiya Gharana). While she wants to give more performances, she wishes that organisations and institutions would come forward to approach performing artistes. Desirous of devoting all her time to music, she says, "I still do my 'riaz' for three to four hours every day. I have reached a point where nothing worries me. Music is my mission, and nothing can stop me. The more time I devote to my music the more satisfied I am."

Talking about the audience she says, "People in Madras, Bangalore and Gwalior are more music conscious. But I do not mind a small audience as long as they can understand and appreciate and be patient."

While she has a lot of publications to her credit ("Mass Media and Status of Women", "Malhar", "Raga System"), the U.P. Sangeet Natak Akademi is going to publish two of her books on music. She is a prominent and active member of the Punjab Sangeet Natak Akademi. She was elected in recognition of her outstanding contribution to the performing arts. She is an advisor for the Arts to the Punjab University, Patiala, and is on the Governing Council of two of Delhi's leading colleges. Shanno is also a member of the Executive Committee of the National Forum of Performing Artistes. Shanno composed music for the documentaries made by the Films Division and TVNF. "This," she says, "gives me a chance to participate in what is happening now. It is a challenge for me. I compose the music for these films on the spot and I enjoy it."

Walk. Run. Lie still...on soft downy grass. Under a smiling golden sun. An orchestra of birds in attendance!

Golden carpets and diamond snows.

The green and gold carpeted Sonamarg and Yusmarg give way to fruit trees and pines. Beyond are exhilarating treks to Aru, Lidderwat and the snows of Khilanmarg and Alpather.

History and assorted company

Lose yourself in history at Martand and Avantipur. Wonderful retreats that offer you all the peace and solitude you could ask for, without missing out on the excitement that is Kashmir. In Kud and Patnitop, you'll keep excellent company with birds of many feathers, flocks of woolly lamb, streams and majestic trees.

Sportlight

Fat trout in the upper Jhelum. The world's highest golf course. Horse riding. Water skiing on the Dal and Nagin lakes. Trekking. Camping. Chairlifts upto the lone mountaintops. And a trip to Ladakh—roof of the world.

The best things in life are almost free

Keep expenses low by staying away from main tourist areas. And get more fun out of your Kashmir trip as well. In Srinagar, houseboats provide good accommodation. Tourist bungalows cost Rs 25/- (double room) and must be booked in advance.

Srinagar is easily accessible by air from Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. These cities are also conveniently connected by rail to Jammu.

A bus journey is generally ex-Srinagar taking 2 to 3 hours to most destinations.

For more information on a budget holiday in Kashmir, please mail this coupon or contact the Commissioner of Tourism, J & K Government, Srinagar, or any of the J & K tourist offices.

● Chandralok Building, Janpath, New Delhi Tel 345373 ● 25 North Wing, World Trade Centre, Cuffe Parade, Colaba, Bombay Tel 214365 ● Airlines House, Lal Darwaza, Ahmedabad Tel 20473 ● 12 Chowringhee, Calcutta Tel 225790 ● Room No. 30, Lal Bahadur Stadium. Hyderabad. ● 2 Court Road, Amritsar.

Commissioner of Tourism
J & K Government
Srinagar

J&K TOURISM

Please tell me how I can live in Kashmir on Rs. 50/60/90+ (tick whichever applicable) per day with details of accommodation, transport and meal charges.

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Kashmir

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